**COVER:** The seal-shaped emblem of the RAS-KB consists of the following Chinese characters:槿 (top right), 域 (bottom right), 菁 (top left), 萧 (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 as 2 hard copies printed double-spaced on A4 paper and 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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CPO Box 255, Seoul 100-602, Republic of Korea  
Tel.: (82-2) 763-9483; Fax: (82-2) 766-3796;  
email: royalasiatickorea@gmail.com  

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Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, C.P.O. Box 255, Seoul, Korea
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Email: raskb@kornet.net Homepage: www.raskb.com
My 45 years with the RASKB

Bae Sue Ja (Sue Bae)

My career at the RAS-KB started with a phone call on February 27, 1967 from Mr. Robert A. Kinney, who was a friend of my uncle. It was a few days after I graduated from Seoul National University. Over the phone, Mr. Kinney gave me a general explanation of the RAS-KB and its activities, and then told me that they urgently needed a secretary who could handle administrative work and manage weekend tours. Our long conversation ended with me telling Mr. Kinney that I would start working on March 2.

On the first day, I followed Mr. Kinney to an office, where I was introduced to Mr. C. Ferris Miller. A tall and handsome middle-aged gentleman, Mr. Miller looked like a movie star to me. Mr. Miller had been serving as treasurer and general manager of the RAS-KB for the past few years. However, after chiropractic surgery, he could not walk comfortably and felt pain once in a while. He could no longer perform any work that involved physical activity. He had stopped going on RAS-KB excursions and was only taking care of paperwork he could manage from the office. I was assigned a small desk and a bookcase in the back corner of Mr. Miller’s office. As an advisor to the Bank of Korea, Mr. Miller’s office was very nice and big enough for an extra person.

On December 30, 1967, after ten months at Mr. Miller’s office, the RAS-KB council decided to move its office to a small space in the Research Institute of Korean Studies building near Seodaemun Intersection. I worked there for three years until the office moved again on December 30, 1970 to the tenth floor of the Korea Times Building in Anguk-dong. The new office was near the Jongno Police Station, and there were many surprise visits by police officers, who kept a close eye on all RAS-KB activities, including lecture meetings, during the Park Jung Hee period between 1962 and 1979. The officers would ask who was giving a lecture, why, and who the participants were. They even asked me to block the window, which was facing the Blue House. During that time, all foreigner activities were scrutinized and reported to the Intelligence...
Bureau. Once, I was repeatedly summoned to the police for questioning. I had ordered one hundred copies of the *Joseon Cookbook* from Charles Tuttle Company in Japan, and the police wanted to know why I had ordered a “Joseon” cookbook, not a “Hanguk” cookbook. Since the North Koreans called themselves Joseon, the name of the book had raised the alarm. I had to explain that the book was about traditional Korean cooking from the Joseon Dynasty. I asked, “What about the Joseon Hotel and the Joseon Ilbo, and Joseon everything in company names?” After that, they finally stopped asking questions.

From 1967 to 1969, most RAS lecture meetings were held at the auditorium at the National Medical Center on Euljiro 6-ga. The RAS-KB could use the auditorium free of charge under one condition: that the members eat at the Scandinavian dining hall operated by the National Medical Center. At the time, it was the only restaurant serving buffet dinner in Korea. During these three sweet years, the lecture meetings were always followed by members feasting on Smörgåsbord.

**Lectures**

There were several particularly popular lectures and performances that drew a huge crowd:

“Korean Patterns” by Dr. Paul Crane, November 8, 1971 (350 attendees)
Bongsan Mask Dance, April 25, 1973 (500 attendees)
This is Korea: film screening, August 22, 1974 (360 attendees)
Gangnyeong Mask Dance, August 27, 1980 (400 attendees)
“North Korea: yesterday and today” by Andrew Buzo, May 27, 1981 (220 attendees)

The most popular lecture meetings were held in the spacious auditorium in the Korea Times building while we had our office there. The RAS-KB office moved again to its current location at the Korean Christian Building in Yeonji-dong, Jongno-gu, on December 30, 1975.

During my time with the RAS-KB, I arranged lecture meetings and tours, kept membership records and communicated with members on a daily basis, sold a lot of books, and arranged forty-five annual Garden Parties. I have arranged a total of 2,075 tours and accompanied most of them. I never once called in sick to cancel a tour, even when I was pregnant. Through RAS activities, I met innumerable remarkable people.
My 45 years with the RASKB

who enriched my life.

I have had the privilege to collaborate with many wonderful people on many tours. Among them are Drs. Dan and Carol Adams, who came to Korea in September 1980 and left in June 2011. While they stayed in Korea, they led over two hundred tours with me. The Adamses devoted much of their time and effort to helping other members of the RAS-KB learn about Korean culture and history.

Mr. Peter Bartholomew has led over 60 tours over the last 35 years, including the Walking Tours of Joseon Seoul, Suwon, and Gangneung.

Alan Heyman led tours of gut (shamanistic ritual), National Music Institute Museum, and Bulgogi on the Han River and boat tours.

Kyu Yi, the last crowned Prince of Joseon, led tours through the Secret Garden, Changdeokgung Palace, and royal tombs.

Dr. Horace G. Underwood led church tours and the Incheon-Suwon Narrow Gauge Train tours.

Dr. Zo Za Yong led tours to Songnisan and the Emille Museum, a folk art museum he founded.

My brother, Dr. Bae Kyung-Yul also helped with many Seoraksan and overseas tours.

I cannot list all of the 2,075 tours I have arranged and accompanied, but I am happy to say that they were all completed without major incidents. One tour that I cannot forget is the tour to Songnisan, Beopjusa, and Emille Museum on May 1, 1982, on Buddha’s birthday. For this particular tour, 150 people signed up and filled four buses. I was eight months pregnant with my second daughter. My doctor had warned, “Don’t go on any tours, or you could be in serious danger.” However, instead of sitting at home and worrying, I decided to lead this large group to Songnisan. I found three members from the group to take charge of each bus, for there were no mobile phones at the time. Fortunately, everything went smoothly and worked out as planned. On this trip were the US ambassador and the German Ambassador, so we were escorted by three police cars from the park entrance to the Soknisan National Park, and then back out again after the tour. We had a wonderful lunch at the Emille Museum, which was located right next to the famed Minister Tree, visited Beopjusa and returned to Seoul. The following weekend, I led another large group of 120 people on the North Han Valley Tour to Yuneung in Geumgok. About twenty days later, I delivered a baby girl. My late husband, Dr. Kim Kyum-gil, was quite surprised, to say the least, to see that I led all these tours under such conditions.

There were several island tours that I remember as having been
troublesome. Ulleug-do was one of those trips that no one knew what to expect. Several times, on our way to the island, we were caught in a torrential storm. The waves were so high, there was water everywhere, and our members began to feel seasick. We were lucky that we could turn back and proceed to plan B, the scenic tour of Seorak National Park before we got home safely and as scheduled. In the worst case scenario, we would have been stranded on Ulleung-do island for three extra days, out of food and money.

On one Hong-do and Heuksan-do trip, I was waiting for Mrs. Park, who often accompanied RAS-KB trips and cooked for the group, to pack up to leave. The boat that we were supposed to be boarding in ten minutes began to move farther and farther away from the dock, with all of our members on it. The members aboard the ship began to panic and thought that clearly they must have been on the wrong boat, seeing that their tour leader was still on the island. We helplessly watched the boat appear smaller, and smaller, and smaller. Miraculously, a man in a motorboat appeared out of nowhere and offered to take us to the boat for 100,000 won. With his help, Mrs. Park and I were able to get on our boat to join the group.

There are more stories than I can relate in a few pages. For those who are interested, some more episodes from the RAS-KB tours can be found in volume 82 of Transactions from 2007, in an article written by Dan Adams, chronicling his twenty seven years of leading RAS tours.

During my time with the RAS-KB, I got married in 1974, had my first daughter in 1976, and a second daughter in 1982; I was pleasantly surprised and felt greatly honored to be awarded an MBE from the British Queen in 2001. my husband and lifelong companion passed away in 2009. After my husband passed away, I decided that it was finally time for me to retire.

My husband used to always joke that I married the RAS-KB before I married him. In that sense, I lived with my husband for 35 years, but I was with the RAS-KB for 45 years. During these years, my family has given me infinite freedom to spend my weekends with the RAS-KB, and I appreciate their generosity and encouragement greatly. My husband and mother-in-law, who have both passed away, were an enormous support in my life. My two daughters, who have grown up to be wonderful women, have also helped by taking care of themselves in my absence. Last but not least, I would like to thank all of the council members of the RAS-KB, past and present, who have offered me thoughtful advice and fresh ideas. I deeply appreciate all of their efforts in making the RAS-KB a wonderful organization. As I retire after forty-five years.
years of employment at the RAS-KB, it is my sincere desire that RAS-KB will continue to inspire and enrich the lives of many others as it has done for me. I hope to see the RAS-KB thrive and prosper in the lives and memories of its members for many years to come.

Sue Ja Bae served as the General Manager of the RAS-KB, from March 1967 to December 2011. She is now the Honorary Manager. She read the above text as her Retiring Speech at a party given in her honor in December 2011.
My 45 years with the RASKB
Back to the Past:  
A Visit to North Korea in October 2011

J. E. Hoare

This is no scholarly paper but rather a rambling account, with reflections, of a visit to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK – North Korea) in October 2011, my first visit as a tourist. Before coming to that, I should recount something of my previous experience there, as the first official British representative.

I left North Korea in October 2002, having lived there for 18 months. It had been an exciting time and an unexpected end to my diplomatic service career. I had never expected to be a British diplomat. Although born in England, I come of Catholic Irish stock, with a fair amount of rather vague republicanism in the background on both sides of the family, at least in the telling. But five years into a PhD on Japan, and having failed to land an academic post, in 1969 I applied to join what was then the Research Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. “RD” as it was known was the equivalent of the U S State Department’s INR Bureau, an information gathering and assessment department, supporting the political work of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and its overseas’ posts. Despite occasional attempts to break away, I remained a member of what later became “Research Analysts” until January 2003. In the interim, I spent almost four years in Seoul, where I served on the council of the RAS and even became President for one year, and roughly the same amount of time in Beijing. Then, following the unexpected decision to establish diplomatic relations with the DPRK (North Korea) late in 2000, I was asked would I go to Pyongyang as the first British representative. It was no contest. Although the work I was doing was varied, often interesting and sometimes exciting, there was little progress – I had been doing much the same thing for years. So the chance of a new role was one that I could not miss.
No doubt I was somewhat starry-eyed, though I suspect that since I was nearly 58 when I was appointed, the stars were pretty dim. I had worked on the DPRK for many years and visited in 1998. Susan, my wife, who came with me, had also worked in the FCO on East Asia and had served in China during the last two years of the Cultural Revolution. Our time in Beijing coincided with the demonstrations and the savage crackdown of June 1989. We had seen a Communist state in action and our expectations of the DPRK were relatively low. Yet even if few now seem to remember it, 2001 was a time of hope in Korean affairs. Kim Dae-jung’s “sunshine policy” was very much in place and the Clinton administration had moved from being on the edge of bombing the North over its nuclear programme to a strong expectation of a presidential visit. The light water reactor (LWR) project, agreed in 1994, was well under way. The North Koreans were pleased that Western European countries were establishing diplomatic relations, even if disappointed to find that most had no intention of opening permanent missions in Pyongyang. The fact that the British decided to open on the spot was seen as a very positive gesture, which not even a major dispute over our communications could entirely undermine.

The fact that I was asked to establish a British Embassy where no embassy had been before was also an exciting prospect. I had first become interested in embassies as organizations when doing research for my PhD on nineteenth century Japan. Living and working in Seoul led to a small book on the British Embassy, published to mark the centenary of diplomatic relations. In Beijing, I carried out a similar exercise, and after my return to London in 1991, the Embassy in Tokyo asked me to write up an account of their history. The end result was a full-length book that appeared in 1999, telling the story of the three embassies.

If only I had waited! Setting up the Pyongyang Embassy produced experiences more akin to those of nineteenth century diplomats than I would have thought possible. We too were a long way from home, in a very different society, with poor communications and reporting to colleagues who were far too busy to take account of our concerns. It also taught me new skills, including how to tie up a diplomatic bag, that I have never needed since.

1 Here and elsewhere I use the modified form of the McCune-Reischauer romanization, as used in the DPRK.
An account of my time in Pyongyang exists in various forms and I will not repeat it here. It had good and bad points, but in general, North Korean officials were helpful, our diplomatic colleagues were friendly, we had enough visitors to keep us active, and we had regular trips to Beijing. Within the country, we could travel much more than I had expected and certainly far more than had been the case in China in the 1970s. We were free to walk or drive about the greater Pyongyang area, and could drive to Nampo and to Mount Myohyang, technically part of the Pyongyang area. Just before I left, we were told that we no longer needed to give notice to go to Wonsan and need not be accompanied by a Korean official. Since the UK was a contributor to UN and European Union-funded aid projects, we could go on monitoring visits to such projects. So we went to farms, food processing factories, hospitals, orphanages and schools. Our ability to talk to people was limited and our hosts controlled what we saw. But one learns by keeping one’s eyes open and by reading between the lines of official statements. It makes a difference when your evening walk is in Pyongyang rather than London.

We left in the usual welter of farewell parties just as the storm broke in October 2002 over the issue of highly enriched uranium. By then, the positive atmosphere of 2001 was replaced by a sourer mood. Relations with the United States plunged as the Bush administration unpicked the advances of the Clinton years. The North Koreans were also disappointed that diplomatic relations with European countries produced little in the way of assistance or political support. The EU closely followed the US position and proved just as inclined as the US to lecture them on the shortcomings of their country. My successors found the relationship harder than I had done.

We returned in 2004 for a brief visit with a University of Cambridge delegation, whose main purpose was to sound out the possibility of academic exchanges at all levels from undergraduate to faculty members. It was jointly hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education. No longer a diplomat, it came as something of a shock to have to pay for our visas but once back in Pyongyang, we were treated as before. No restrictions were placed on our

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movements around Pyongyang, and so we wandered about freely in the bright May evenings. I was able to contact former colleagues and the Embassy without any difficulty. We could photograph as much as we wished except in the Tongil market where the sight of a camera got one of our party into a long harangue. We had been warned that we should not take photographs there so it was something of an own goal.

Pyongyang was much as it had been when we left. Although there were some changes since 2002, they were not extensive. More stalls were visible on the streets, and there were some new restaurants available. The stamp shop had become smarter, with a philatelic-themed restaurant attached. Some construction work which I remembered as under way in 1998 remained incomplete. People still avoided a foreigner’s gaze if at all possible and certainly evaded any attempt at conversation. Our interpreter was friendly and informative, our somewhat junior MFA mentor less so, though he apparently eased up during late night karaoke sessions.

It would be seven years before we returned. In spring 2011, Nicholas Wood approached me, asking if I would be interested in leading a tour to the DPRK. He was a former journalist who now ran Political Tours, a company, to quote their website, with, ‘…the aim of giving people practical and first-hand insight into some of the most critical regions in the world’. The hope was to go beyond the usual tourist sites and to learn something of the politics of the country to be visited. Political Tours had run successful visits to the Balkans, Wood’s own special field as a journalist, and to Northern Ireland, where they had been able to meet senior figures from both sides. While I was interested, I was a little cautious since I had never led a tour before and was also due to have a pacemaker fitted. But all proceeded smoothly. The DPRK Embassy in London said that they were pleased that I was leading such a tour. There was good publicity, including even a piece in the (North) Korean Central News Agency bulletin, based, curiously enough, on a Voice of America Broadcast.

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5 Pyongyang, July 27 (KCNA). VOA introduced a British travel company's Korea tourism program on July 15. The Political Tours announced that the first tourist group would enter North Korea on October 15, accompanied by UK's first charge d'affaires ad interim to Pyongyang, James Edward Hoare, the radio said, adding: During ten days of tourism, the ex-charge d'affaires plans to explain to the tourists the culture and political situation of north Korea and the experience he gained during his career as a diplomat.
The ROK Embassy was noticeably less enthusiastic. I was invited to lunch by a senior member of staff, who advised me against leading such a tour. No explanation was given, but soon I found Koreans that I scarcely knew approaching me and suggesting that it would be better not to go. No doubt they thought there was something special in Political Tours. They may also have thought that being a tour guide to North Korea was not how a senior diplomat should behave – ROK diplomats seem to work on the principle that once you have worked for government, you continue to represent government. Some seemed nonplussed when I told them of former colleagues leading tours all over the place.

A more pressing concern was whether there would be enough people to make the tour economically worthwhile for Political Tours. While people do visit the DPRK as tourists, it is not a huge market and however enticing the publicity, was clearly not one to get involved in easily. But although numbers were small, Wood decided to go ahead. So in October 2011, Susan and I flew first to Seoul, to take part in a conference on the Chongdong area, and then on to Beijing to meet our fellow travelers. All along the route I clutched my paper saying ‘pacemaker’ in numerous languages, which seemed to work.

We were eight in all, including Nicholas, Susan and me. Only Susan and I had visited the North before, but all the others were well-traveled. Two days of useful briefing in Beijing included sensible advice from Barbara Demick, author of Nothing to Envy, about not getting hung up over restrictions on movements. Instead she recommended always being alert for what was happening around you and staying awake on bus journeys.

And so the great adventure began. One auspicious start was the brand new Russian TU200 4-100 aeroplane that would take us to

Nicolas Wood, who founded the Political Tours early this year, gave the reason why he chose North Korea as a tourist destination. His plan is to open a way of getting experience at first hand in the country drawing international interest, not only through media reports. In North Korea the tourists will make a round of Pyongyang and other major tourist attractions. They will also visit factories in Hamhung city, Songdowon International Children's Camp and University of Agriculture in Wonsan city and other places.

The Political Tours is said to get many inquiries about North Korea tourism. Wood said he would decide whether to continue such tourism program on a regular basis after taking the tourists' opinions about their tourism mainly aimed to get a good understanding of the region's situation.
Pyongyang, a distinct improvement on the ancient Russian planes we had flown in the past. It was a surprise to find that, like Aeroflot, on which it is clearly modeled, Air Koryo flights are now dry – so no more trays of champagne being taken into the cockpit and no beer for breakfast, long a staple of expatriate departures’ from Pyongyang. Food had not improved. The air hostesses were as beautiful as ever and just as anxious to get you into your seat. The flight was uneventful as was our arrival. Rather than being bussed a short distance, we were allowed to walk across the tarmac. Had we but realized it, this would be our last unescorted walk for a week.

The main terminal was undergoing refurbishment, no doubt as part of the sprucing up for Kim Il Sung’s centenary. The temporary substitute was barnlike but it was somewhat more high tech than we had been used to. There were now electronic announcement boards and the process of checking passports and visas was also more up to date. The young man who checked mine looked at his screen and then smiled as he said ‘To my country welcome back’. Then we moved to the care of the Korean National Tourist Corporation (KNTC).

I had very little contact with KNTC while living in Pyongyang. They seemed to have no interest in developing contacts with the embassy and tried hard to prevent their charges from doing so. When one British tour leader contacted me in some agitation, we easily circumvented KNTC obstructions by me stopping by the Yanggakdo Hotel for a drink just as she and her party was returning. The KNTC officials were not very happy but could not prevent us meeting. Our own travels never involved KNTC. My guests were my responsibility, whether they were officials, family or friends. We had no difficulty in arranging programs or travel for them with the assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At some places we came up against restrictions such as not being able to leave the hotel grounds, but at others, including Kaesong, nobody tried to stop us wandering about or taking photographs. We were about to enter a different world.

How different was soon obvious. Political Tours had booked into the Koryo Hotel from the very beginning of the tour, on the basis that it was much better to be downtown than in the island ghetto of the Yanggakdo. (There was a certain sentimental value for us, since we had lived in the Koryo for six months after we arrived.). Now we were told that the Koryo was fully booked and we would be based at the Yanggakdo. Protests that we had already informed family and other contacts that we would be in the Koryo fell on very deaf ears and it was a somewhat disgruntled group that set off for the city. Our KNTC guides, while polite
and friendly, showed no sign whatsoever that our tour was in any way different from the others that they handled, even if sometimes they acted as though we posed a particular threat.

A measure of nervousness was obvious from the start. We had been late leaving the airport, partly because of the debate over where we were staying, and so we were rather rushed through our first planned visits, to the area around Mansudae hill. The grand statue was off limits as work proceeded to prepare it for the 2012 celebrations. We were also given clear instructions. No photographs of people, construction work or things military. We should ‘avoid defacing brochures’ with the leaders’ pictures. We should also not walk about except with our guides since people would not know who we were and might become concerned. I was pointedly ignored when I said that I had walked about the city for nearly two years without anybody showing much concern. As darkness fell, we scrabbled about taking pictures of people and construction works before being taken to the Yanggakdo. Driving through the streets, it was obvious that more electricity was available than when we had last been there, and many buildings were floodlit. Indeed, one of the most striking contrasts with the past in Pyongyang was the relative brightness of some parts of the city at night, confirmed by the views from hotel windows. More people and more vehicles were also evident.

The Yanggakdo was its usual gloomy self, with a trapped turtle still swimming beside the bar. Over a rather dreary meal, we were told that there would be various changes to our itinerary – something I had expected would happen – but that we would do most of what had originally been included. Spared a visit to the Mansudae Hill statue since it was being refurbished, we would also have to miss the juche tower, since the lantern was being replaced. There was no discussion of what people with Political Tours might be expecting that would be different from a standard tour. But there was one new element in that I was to have lunch with Mr Ri Yong Ho of the MFA (ex-ambassador to London and now Vice Foreign Minister) the next day – the guides professed to have no idea of who he was and showed no interest in why I might be having lunch with him. The next morning, they told us Susan was invited as well. After dinner, most of the party retired but we went to the bar – the call of the draught beer was still strong. There we ran into the APTN representative\(^6\), who had been living in Pyongyang when we did, and who

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\(^6\) Associated Press Television News. They had tried to open a permanent office in Pyongyang in 2002, assisted by the embassy. We had almost got there when the
now managed their recently established office from Hong Kong. Two Red Cross workers were also there. One was an ex-journalist with the BBC who had once interviewed me on ‘Asia Today’ a now defunct TV program. Nicholas joined us and we eventually left them to talk journalism together.

The morning sunrise saw Pyongyang in an autumnal mist, with the newly-glass clad Ryugyong Hotel catching the light. As always, the city was amazingly active in the early hours, in contrast to its sleepy atmosphere for most of the day. Only in the later afternoon and early evening would it again become animated. Before breakfast, we tried the television. Apart from the Korean stations, it would receive Chinese Central Television, the Japanese NHK, Italian Radio and Television, and BBC World Television. In our room, alas, the last appeared to be suffering from a terminal defect and proved impossible to hear. But it was an improvement on the days when we had been reduced to watching children’s television on winter weekends.

And then our program began. First was Mangyongdae, the ‘native home’ of Kim Il Sung. The sunshine helped but it was clear that our party was soon becoming bored. The Mansudae Art Studio, which followed, aroused more interest but there was widespread disappointment that no revolutionary posters seemed to be available. They were to prove unavailable everywhere; perhaps the North Koreans have come to realize that they could sell them more profitably internationally. To complete the morning, we had the Party Foundation Museum. The DPRK approach to museums and art galleries is old-fashioned and didactic. Where leaders are concerned, it is also highly reverential. Diplomats have to put up with a lot of this and not just in the DPRK. One becomes used to it and goes with the flow. One can learn a little even if it is not very exciting or profound knowledge. But it was clearly not what most of our party was

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Far Eastern Economic Review ran a spoiler story in that said that although APTN was registered in London, it was really an American company. The North Koreans then refused to go ahead with the arrangements until 2011. Journalistic dog eats dog!

One thing that had not changed was the odd use of English. One DPRK official explained to me in 2001 that once a word or phrase had been approved for use, that was it. No matter how often Koreans with a good command of foreign languages or native speakers pointed out that a word was quaint or old-fashioned, once it was in the canon, there was no shifting it. This was especially the case with anything to do with leaders but was not confined to that sphere.
expecting or hoping for. It was not a very happy group that we left to go to lunch.

Lunch was a great success. Not only was the Vice Minister there but so were others we had known and the ambassador-designate to London. Reminiscences about times past – the MFA were still using a little book on Korean Customs and Etiquette I had given them both for information on Korean behavior (!) and for English practice⁸ - were accompanied by comments on times present. Libya was much in the news, and there was laughter when the Vice Minister pointed out that his successor would not be bothered as he had been by constant requests from the FCO to follow the Libyan example.⁹ News of talks with the US had just been made public and Mr Ri talked about the likely difficulties with elections in both the US and the ROK. They expressed pleasure that at last some DPRK students were going to the UK on government scholarships.

And then they raised the question of why we were in the Yanggakdo Hotel. When they had tried to make contact, the Koryo knew nothing of us. We recounted what we had been told. We were also asked whether we were seeing the British Embassy and said that we had asked to but it did not seem to feature on our program.

Lunch being over, Susan and I went to the hotel shop for old times’ sake. It was better stocked than in the past; the aging wines that had once been a feature had gone, replaced by Latin American ones. On emerging, we saw one of our lunch partners deep in conversation with one of our two guides. When we joined them, we were told that after our visit to the East Coast, we would probably be moved to the Koryo …

So we rejoined the others and set off with a lighter heart for Wonsan. Once under way, everybody fell asleep except me, a pattern that would repeat itself during the coming days. This was a pity for the sleepers really did miss much information about the country. It was noticeable, for example, that around Pyongyang, many more tractors were operating in the fields than had been the case 10 years before. Further out, oxen were still common but these were fatter oxen than in 2001. Bicycles

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⁹ Our guides clearly knew about events in Libya, at least in broad outline. They expressed shock at the killing of Gaddafi. But their questions were very circumspect.
were much more in evidence than in the past. At times, around the towns and villages, the numbers approached China in the 1970s. And bicycles were not only being used to carry people but they were also carrying what was clearly farm or private plot produce, often in large amounts. Another addition to the transport scene was motorcycles. These were formerly only associated with the police or the military but now there were some that appeared to be owned by non-uniformed people. Saigon or Hanoi it was not but it was a further sign that the DPRK is – literally – not static. One or two even had young lady pillion passengers, while others were adapted for carrying heavy loads.\footnote{We were later to see some models at the Three Revolution Exhibition Center in Pyongyang.}

Another sign of change was the presence of heavy machinery for road building and similar tasks. There was not much of it; two units seen in four days’ travelling but that was a higher rate than I had ever seen in 2001-2. The bulk of the work is clearly still done by hand – we saw some underway between Wonsan and Hamhung. But more modern equipment is coming into use and not just in the Pyongyang area.

Both Wonsan and Hamhung, and most of the towns and villages in between were a good deal smarter in the past. Indeed, the Vice Minister had said we might well find Hamhung smarter than Pyongyang. It did not quite reach that standard, but both cities showed signs of new building and a general sprucing up. Wonsan had a new museum, a pastiche of the railway station, hotel, locomotive and carriages that were supposedly used by Kim Il Sung on his arrival there in autumn 1945. The very seat on which he had sat in the train was known and marked, a truly remarkable survival given what happened to Wonsan and to the railways in the north during the Korean War. I fear the hard bitten realists of Political Tours were not wholly convinced but we all took many photographs.

But if both cities were smart and clean, they lacked any sign of industrial activity. Most of Wonsan’s fishing boats seemed to be permanently tied up, although since we were kept well away from the dock area, despite a walk through the docks featuring on our program, it was not possible to be absolutely sure. Lots of people fished with rod and line. Some of what they caught was consumed on the spot with much singing and dancing and some may have been for sale or exchange. We were invited to join in but this clearly concerned our guides so we let it pass. No doubt this was also wise from a hygiene point of view, if not
from a social one. Wonsan seemed to have an electricity problem, with several blackouts in the course of the evening.

A visit to Wonsan Agricultural University proved to be largely concerned with the visits by members of the Kim family and a view of the outside of a large greenhouse. We were told that there were no students present, though we could hear some practicing music and saw others playing football. We were warned that there had been a ‘serious incident’ recently when some visitors had burst in on the orchestra, an action that had badly upset the students. We promised not to take similar action. A visit to the Songdowon international children’s holiday camp was more agreeable if not more informative. Again, the leaders’ visits were stressed and boredom spread among our number. But the children, who ranged from c. 11 to about 16 and were all Korean – foreign children were said to come in the summer – seemed very self-assured and not at all fazed by a bunch of foreigners. The facilities seemed in good order and the children were clean and well-dressed, unlike children I had had seen along the East Coast in the past. Of course, these were privileged children; one does not go to such places if you have the wrong class background.

Then it was on to Hamhung, taking in a model collective farm on the way. There could be little doubt that this was a favored place. It had 20 tractors, flatbed trucks and much else besides, while Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un had been there three days previously – we were able to verify this on our departure, for the glossy magazine Korea Pictorial available on Air Koryo featured the visit, complete with pictures. That said, its statistics, clearly newly painted for the previous visit, did not add up and the farm leader admitted that they were unlikely to meet their targets this year. He also declined to answer a question about mortality in the famine years of the 1990s; 10 years before, I would have been given some sort of answer. To complete our visit, we were shown what the leader claimed was his house. It was certainly well equipped, even if the hi-fi set was somewhat dated, but it lacked any feeling of being lived in. There was no smell of cooking and no clothes about. Cheerful children burst out of the school, seizing on the visitors as a major distraction and handling their presence with much confidence. We were clearly not their first experience of foreigners.

Hamhung, which I first visited in 1998, was certainly smarter. But none of the factories appeared to be working. Our promised visit to the fertilizer factory was cancelled. When we drove past, the tall chimney which on other occasions had pumped out bright yellow smoke - spectacular if rather worrying - was doing nothing. Even the wagons
packed high with scrap metal destined for China, a notable feature in earlier years, had gone. We spent the night at the Majon Guesthouse. This was largely unchanged since my last visit in 2002, although the water heating arrangements had improved somewhat and posed less threat to life and limb. An EU delegation was also staying but old habits die hard and we were carefully segregated. Although we were the only two groups staying in the guesthouse, they ate in one dining room, we in another, and our departure next day was carefully timed so that we would not meet.

Next day confirmed a general lack of economic activity except for some building works, accompanied by many exhortatory posters, near the Hamhung Hotel where we had lunch. This hotel was a bit smarter and brighter than on previous visits but there was no water to flush the toilets or to wash one’s hands. Our guides confirmed that Hamhung had a major water problem.

A visit to Yi Taejo’s house, restored in the 18th century, which I had been to in 2002 when it was rarely shown to foreigners, was a pleasant interlude and perhaps the one sign that Hamhung was now a tourist destination. A walk around the main square followed, to see the largest theatre in the country. Unfortunately – we were now becoming familiar with the phrase – it was closed for refurbishment, so the outside was as far as we got. Some of our party detected hostility in the stares thrown in our direction but I think it was more likely curiosity. Relatively few foreigners visited the city until recently, so tourists are still rare birds. Nobody actually fell off a bicycle looking at us but it came pretty close at times.

On the way back to Pyongyang, we passed one smoking chimney; we were told that it was a cement works, which makes sense given the amount of construction under way. Also very visible were the cell phone masts. This of course was a big change from the past, with our guides using them all the time. They said that the system worked all over the country, apart from the deep mountain areas. They certainly seemed to be able to make contact with Pyongyang and other cities with no difficulty.

There was a subdued air about our party on the drive back to Pyongyang. Whatever had been expected, it was clearly not what we were getting. For a time, there were some rather hostile suggestions about what was wrong with the DPRK and what should be done to improve things. Unsurprisingly, such remarks did not go down well with the guides. For Susan and me, however, the main impression was one of change and possibly even some improvement.
We duly checked in at the Koryo, which was indeed crowded with people in their best clothes and with many medals. We were told that they had come from the East Coast area and were there because Kim Jong Il had praised their efforts during his visit just ahead of ours. It was also made clear that moving to the Koryo would not mean an increase in mobility. We were firmly told not to leave the hotel unaccompanied under any circumstances – something of a trial too since we had lived there for six months and come and gone as we wished.

Not that there would have been much time to wander about. In the well-known tradition, we now found ourselves swept up in a massive sightseeing program just like every other tour group. Only the order varied. Some things went well – the USS Pueblo and the Korean War Museum, for example. In the latter place, we had a young and bright female officer as a guide, who was not at all thrown by being questioned about her account of how the Korean War started and seemed well aware that there were many other views. It was not always so. Other experiences were less satisfactory. The Three Revolutions Museum, which appeared to have been opened for us – or at least we were the only people there – did not go down too well, especially when we were solemnly shown pictures of DPRK rockets and satellites in space.

The relentless pace continued the next day. Some parts worked, some did not. There was much disappointment that dramatic revolutionary posters were no longer on sale even in the Foreign Languages Bookstore, which had been our most reliable source. A trip to the Golden Lanes Bowling Alley allowed us to see the privileged young of Pyongyang at play – and also on their mobile phones. The MFA turned up trumps again since we were then swept off to the British Embassy for a briefing. This was probably the most ‘political’ activity of all; I asked the chargé d’affaires when they had heard of our visit, He said the MFA had contacted them two hours before … no change there! Dinner produced another surprise. The once dowdy and run-down older of the two diplomatic clubs had undergone a major facelift and was now very swish indeed, with a vast swimming pool. The menu was less exciting but many toasts seemed to improve relations with our guides.

This did not last. The next day was Panmunjom and Kaesong. The later was looking distinctly seedy with none of the sprucing up of the East Coast. Panmunjom proved another disappointment in that we could not go into the conference room for reasons that remained unexplained. An ROK military party with wives was visiting from the other side and the DPRK guards all wore steel helmets, so perhaps it was a little tenser
than usual. But no explanation was forthcoming. On the DPRK side, the only changes that I noticed from previous visits was that the UN flag at the table where the armistice had been signed in 1953 had at last been renewed, and that commerce had taken off in a big way at the souvenir shop. In the past, it was very much take it or leave it, but now a series of ladies pushed hard to sell mementoes of Panmunjom, souvenirs of Kaesong and drinks and snacks. There were even hints at haggling over prices. A similar atmosphere prevailed at the museum shop, which had originally been built for ROK tourists – it did not exist when I had last been to Kaesong in 2002. An excellent lunch ran late so there was not time to visit the statue. Some audible rejoicing did not please the guides. Chatting with one of them on the way back, I was told that Kim Il Sung had drawn on Confucian philosophy in constructing juche. Hitherto the default mode in the DPRK has been that Confucianism was a superstitious hangover from the past and nothing to do with the present.

Our last stop, on our return to Pyongyang, was the Grand People’s Study House. Like the airport, this had gone much more electronic, with large notice boards announcing meetings and classes. The language teaching rooms were also full of Dell computers. Not the most up-to-date models, but far in advance of anything that there had been in the past. Groups of earnest students struggled with the same old rote teaching methods, however, but perhaps they were later allowed to play games on the computers. One more echo of the past was an approach by a member of the staff whom I had known before for help in updating the English corner, which since I had left, he said, had received no new books. I said I would raise it in London. I did but heard no more and suspect that nuclear matters make it unlikely that anything will be done.

We were nearly done. A last dinner together was jolly enough and our departure the next day went smoothly. Despite all the dire warnings that cameras would be checked at the airport, nothing at all happened. We took off on time and landed safely at Beijing. All agreed that we had plenty to think about, even if I doubt that we would have agreed on what we had learned.

REFLECTIONS

A. THE TOUR
Looking back, one can see why there were problems. It was the first time that Political Tours had gone to the DPRK. If funds had been available, it
might have been better if there had been a dry run to see how we would be treated and what difficulties might arise. I was aware of some likely pitfalls but my earlier experiences were not a guide to how tourist groups can be treated. Being handled by the MFA and by the Tourist Corporation are very different experiences. A dry run might also have reassured KNTC that we did not have horns and hoofs – though I suspect that suspicions would have remained. There well have been doubts about what our real purpose was. If the ROK embassy in London was suspicious about what I, a former diplomat, was doing leading a tour to the DPRK, it is hard to imagine that there were not some doubts in the DPRK as well. Then, two of our party had been journalists, and the DPRK has a great nervousness about journalists. The way they posed questions and the type of question they asked reflected this background, and may have aroused concerns.¹¹

We were perhaps also victims of our own publicity. There is no doubt that all activities in the DPRK are intensely political, so in a sense all tours are political tours. But rather than looking for the politics in what people did and what was displayed, our group hoped to learn as they would in other countries by direct contact with people and by the response to probing questions. Such high expectations were perhaps bound to be disappointed, especially on the first tour. With time, and providing there are no negative incidents, there might be an acceptance that Political Tours’ participants are not hostile but genuinely interested in developments in the DPRK.

This will of course require a change of attitude on the part of KNTC, which will not come easily – the present approach has been honed for nearly 30 years, and no doubt suits them well. But there is clearly an attempt currently underway to attract more tourists. Tourists were not uncommon in 2001 but there seemed an increase in numbers last autumn. Many of these were from China but there were also other westerners. Perhaps eventually, the guides will stop treating grown adults as though they were five years old. From our experience, it seems that even their colleagues in the MFA have doubts about the way they treat their guests.¹²

B. THE DPRK.

¹¹ I had a hard job persuading the guide at the Three Revolutions’ Exhibition that they we were not journalists. In fact, nobody appears to have published accounts of the visit apart from me.

¹² The infantilizing of the North Koreans by the system is one of the themes of B.R. Myers, The Cleanest Race: How the North Koreans see themselves and why in matters, (Brooklyn, NY: Melville House, 2010); see pp. 93 et seq.
A week may be a long time in politics, but it is a short time in the DPRK! At least on the surface, there were noticeable changes, some of which are described above. New buildings were very obvious in Pyongyang, as was the sprucing up of existing ones. There was less new building elsewhere but Hamhung and Wonsan had certainly had a spring clean. Kaesong however, did not seem to be much changed. Pyongyang had more traffic than the other cities we visited, with some very up to date and expensive vehicles about. Outside Pyongyang, it was bicycles that were most in evidence. Commercial activity was much in evidence, with sacks of foodstuffs being transported on bicycles or lining the side of the road while people waited for lifts. When we stopped on the way back from Wonsan, a young women appeared from nowhere with fruits for sale. In the shops that we went into, which were a very limited range, although it did include the East Pyongyang Department Store, there were plenty of goods, mostly from China. As in the past, customers were few even though it was the weekend, and not many seemed to be buying anything beyond foodstuffs. Perhaps there is a limit to the number of bidets you can buy, even in Pyongyang.

Other somewhat superficial observations indicated that while the children we saw were certainly well-dressed, and most of them were probably from privileged backgrounds, all were small for their age. The effects of lack of food are still very evident even if there is no immediate crisis. As for sanctions, it would be hard to claim any obvious effect. The range and type of goods available in the shops, the vehicles on the streets and the computer equipment widely available, all much more than ten years’ before, indicated that sanctions have not made much impact. One thing that had not improved was the level of deforestation. Hillsides were as bare as in the past, and wood was still being taken while scarcely established. Susan and I watched with horror what appeared to be the systematic stripping of young trees at one point along a stretch of the Pyongyang-Wonsan highway. Large numbers of people were involved, including the military, and several vehicles in what was clearly a major exercise. It is hard to think what innocent explanation there might be for such an activity.

Then there is the Army First policy. Clearly some in the military do very well; many of the most up to date cars we saw had military number plates. The swish Kaeson fun fare in Pyongyang, with its state of the art Italian rides, is said to be reserved for military families. But Army First does not mean that all the military do well. Wood-fired trucks manned by soldiers struggled to get under way along the roads. Along the
roads, not only ordinary soldiers but officers up to colonel level struggled to get lifts. It seems doubtful that the masses of soldiers working on construction sites (now joined by university students in Pyongyang at least) get much in the way of special treatment. Our military guides in Pyongyang and at Panmunjom, who would count among the privileged were very thin, and as others have remarked, the ROK soldiers on duty at the latter place are much bigger and broader than their northern brethren.

FINAL THOUGHTS.
Political Tours ran another tour during the celebrations of Kim Il Sung’s 100th anniversary, with a different leader. I do not have the details but have heard that this group was allowed more freedom than we had been. Either it was too difficult to impose tight controls in April 2012 or the group was seen as less of a problem under a different leader – perhaps I was more of a difficulty than an asset! Or maybe somebody had realized that it might be better to allow such groups a little more freedom.

The October visit has provided me with a new lease of life as a commentator on the DPRK. Being able to say I was there in October 2011 is far more important to the media than the fact that I have been studying the place since the 1970s, and it certainly proved useful when Kim Jong Il died in December 2011. But I had decided that I would probably not go back in such a role again. Then quite a different organization approached me about a possible tour in 2013… I have no commitment as yet, but cannot help being intrigued.

Back to the Past
The Wall Which Crumbles: 
North Korea and the Outside World

Andrei Lankov

The last 15 years have been a time of profound – if often underestimated – transformation of North Korean society. The official facade of the regime might remain the same, but almost everything else beyond this facade has changed – society, economy, worldview.

In the long run, none of these changes might prove to be as significant as the slow transformation of North Koreans’ ideas about the outside world. Gone are days when the North Korean populace swallowed the official propaganda which presented their country as an island of prosperity in an ocean of suffering and destitution. A more realistic picture of the world is emerging – and in the long run it will have serious consequences for the regime.

The present article traces the changes in the information environment of North Korea and mass perceptions of the outside world. In a nutshell, these changes can be described as a slow but accelerating decline of the self-imposed information isolation, which has for decades been a unique feature of North Korean society.

This article is not based on statistical data or other types of hard evidence which are usually used in social and political studies. There have been attempts to make relatively reliable estimates – like, say, the recent report by the Intermedia research group which attracted much international attention.1 However, all these findings should be taken with a grain of salt. When it comes to North Korea, such evidence is notoriously difficult to get – or, as Markus Noland nicely put it, one should not “trust any datum on North Korea that comes with a decimal

The Wall Which Crumbles

point attached”.

The following article takes a different approach. It is largely based on the present author’s interactions with North Korean refugees (over the last two years, I have interviewed some 150 North Koreans). While the major focus was on the economic conditions of their lives and their coping strategies, their worldview and information environment have been mentioned very frequently – and became a foundation of this article.

LIVING BEHIND A WALL

All communist countries were remarkably unenthusiastic when it came to unauthorized exchanges and interaction with the outside world. They just did not want their common people to mingle with foreigners freely. This reluctance was often explained to the faithful by citing the threat of espionage, as well as worries about possible ideological contamination of simple-minded folks. These threats and worries were present, to be sure. But it seems that the ruling elite in the Communist states simply did not want their people to learn about the level of material abundance and political freedom enjoyed by the peoples of the developed world – hence restrictions on overseas travel, heavy censorship of foreign publications, jamming of broadcasts, and other similar measures which were routinely employed even by the most permissive of Communist states.

Even against such a backdrop, North Korea seems to be an exception. Virtually no other communist state has gone so far in enforcing and maintaining a self-imposed information blockade. North Korea might be the world’s only country where since the 1960s, it has been illegal to own a tunable radio set. All radio sets legally sold in North Korea must have fixed tuning, which allows people merely to listen to broadcasts from a small number of official stations. Officials regularly undertook random searches of private houses in order to make sure that people had not remade their radios into tunable sets.

Foreign publications, with the exception of technical manuals and some textbooks, cannot be owned privately, and in libraries foreign books and periodicals are stored in special sections, only to be accessed by those with the requisite security clearance. Interestingly, no exception was made for periodicals and publications coming from ostensibly friendly communist countries like China and the Soviet Union – both the Soviet Pravda and the Chinese People’s Daily were officially considered to be as

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subversive as *Choson Ilbo* or *The Wall Street Journal*.

A very small number of North Koreans were authorized to travel overseas until very recently. Interactions with foreigners inside the country was ill-advised and avoided by all prudent citizens; long-term foreign residents of Pyongyang (who never numbered more than a few hundred) lived in a virtual gilded cage and could interact only with North Koreans who had been pre-selected for the purpose by the North Korean authorities. They also had to deal with a long list of bans. In the mid-1980s, for example, when I lived in Pyongyang, foreigners were not allowed to visit private houses and most museums. For some reason, they also could not buy movie tickets and, of course, they could venture outside Pyongyang only with special prior permission.

These measures ensured that until the late 1990s, the average North Korean would know surprisingly little about life outside the borders of his or her country. One should also add that unusually strict control over internal movement also made North Koreans remarkably ignorant about conditions in other parts of their own country as well. Since 1969, private trips outside one’s native city or county of residence are impossible without the proper travel permit, which must be issued by the authorities in advance.  

This self-isolation might appear to be excessive and paranoid, but as is often the case with North Korea, there is a sound, if somewhat ruthlessly Machiavellian logic behind these policies. Even compared to other communist countries, North Korea is remarkably vulnerable to the spread of information about the outside world.

One should keep in mind that North Korea is not a fundamentalist religious state. Its leadership’s claims of superiority are not based on their alleged ability/duty to keep the populace spiritually pure and hence ready for the wonders of the afterlife. Instead, North Korea’s leadership claims a knowledge of theories which when/if applied properly, will assure unprecedented socio-economic development and growth. In other words, the North Korean leadership does not promise the faithful the joys of paradise (like say unlimited amounts of sex with 72 ever willing virgins), but rather the wonders of modern technology and the abundance of food, clothes and household amenities.

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Paradoxically, this is the area where North Korea’s leadership has failed in the most spectacular way. This epic failure is further emphasized by the incredible success enjoyed by North Korea’s twin, now affluent and free South Korea, which once was the agricultural backwater of the Korean peninsula. Depending on who is to be believed, the per capita income difference between the South and the North might be as much as 40:1, or at least 15:1\(^4\). Even if the latter “optimistic assumption” is to be believed, this still constitutes the largest difference in per capita income between two countries which share a land border. This gap continues to grow with the passage of time. Therefore, the North Korean government has realized that stability in the country can be effectively maintained only so long as the vast majority of the population remains ignorant about the state of affairs in other countries, above all in South Korea—and this assumption seems to be well-based. This necessitates the above described self-isolation measures, which were first introduced, tellingly, in the mid-1960s, when the once backward South began to catch up with the North.

These policies were further strengthened by the harsh punishments which were given to people who were discovered seeking out contact with outsiders. Listening to foreign broadcasts, or in some cases, merely possessing a tunable radio set, is technically a political crime, which might lead to a few years in a concentration camp, followed by lifelong discrimination.\(^5\) One of the reasons why North Koreans were extremely reluctant to talk to a foreigner on the street was the assumption that any lengthy interactions with a foreigner would make a person the subject of an unpleasant and potentially dangerous investigation. As a result, in the 1970s, North Koreans were known to have virtually run away from such hazardous encounters (this is not the case anymore).

For a brief while, the system worked quite well. This was because, with the technologies available to North Koreans in the 1960s and 1970s, isolation was technically feasible. Therefore, North Koreans tended to accept what they were told by the official propaganda—being deprived of

\(^4\) For details on the ongoing argument over the actual size of North Korean GDP, see I Chong-sok, “Pukhan kukmin sotuk chaepyongka” [Reassessment of the National Income of North Korea], Chongsewa chongchaek, 2008, no. 3: 1–4.

\(^5\) In the published lists of the people who are known to have been inmates of the North Korean camps, one often comes across references to people who were arrested for listening to foreign broadcasts. See: Ichhyŏhin irŭmtŭl [Forgotten Names] (Seoul: Sidae chŏngsin, 2004), 118, 187, 224.
any alternatives, they hardly had a choice.

The official message was simple: North Korea was the best imaginable place to live. At the Kim Il Sung era the media told that inhabitants of the Communist bloc and Third World were doing relatively well, but their lives still were inferior to those of the lucky North Koreans. Things were worse in the countries of the West, above all, in the United States, the embodiment of all things evil. However, the worst place on earth to live was South Korea, ‘a land without light, a land without air’.

Until recently, the South was depicted as a land of terror and poverty where penniless students sold their blood to pay for their textbooks, and sadistic Yankees drove their tanks over Korean girls just for pleasure. The Year One textbook presents North Korea’s children with a terrifying picture: “A school principal in South Korea beats and drives from school a child who cannot pay his monthly fee on time”.6 In high school they learn that “Nowadays, South Korea is swamped with seven million unemployed. Countless people stand in queues in front of employment centers, but not even a small number of jobs is forthcoming. The factories are closing one after another, and in such a situation even people who have work do not know when they will be ousted from their position”.7 Needless to say, these stories are inventions, pure and simple: primary education in South Korea is free, and even in the worst moments of its economic history the number of unemployed people in the South did not even approach seven million.

THE PROPAGANDIST’S BLUNDERS

Somewhat surprisingly, the first breaches in the wall were made possible by mistakes committed by North Korean propagandists themselves. In 1980, South Korea experienced a massive pro-democratic movement, known as Seoul Spring. This culminated in the Kwangju Uprising of May 1980 in which civilians resisted well-armed government forces. Predictably, these events were presented by the North Korean media as

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signs of a coming revolution in the South, which would bring South Koreans to the warm embrace of the Great Leader and his world-saving Juche Ideas (it is possible that at the time North Korean decision makers sincerely believed themselves that the South Korean revolution was just around the corner)

Therefore, in outbursts of expectation and enthusiasm – and also as an attempt to show alleged support for North Korea in the South – footage from Kwangju and other South Korean cities began to be frequently broadcast on North Korean TV. However, this footage produced completely unexpected consequences.

The present author has talked about this with refugees in the South and North Koreans inside the North and all of them recollected the great surprise they felt when they saw the unfolding South Korean revolution. They noticed that protesting South Korean students were dressed much better than the children of North Korean officials. They also discovered that Kwangju, a provincial South Korean city, actually had more high-rise buildings than Pyongyang, the “capital of the revolution” itself. It was evident that, contrary to the official propaganda, South Korea was by no means a land of poverty and destitution. North Korean agitprop workers soon realized their mistake and stopped broadcasting the offending footage, but it was too late: the damage had been done.

Soon after, the North Korean agitprop department made another significant blunder. In 1989, Pyongyang hosted the 13th World Festival of Youth and Students – an international gala event which was supported by the Soviet Union and other communist countries as a part of their united front policy. In the peculiar case of Pyongyang, the 13th World Festival was meant to be North Korea’s answer to the success of the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul.

The North Korean authorities invited South Korean delegates to participate in events. The South Korean government, stubbornly anti-communist at the time, refused to allow members of the left-leaning South Korean nationalist student groups to go to Pyongyang. However, some members ignored the ban and went nonetheless.

One of them was Im Su-kyŏng, then a student at Hankook University of Foreign Studies – charming, good-looking, charismatic and, at the time, an ardent believer in the views of the more radical South Korean “progressives” (a peculiar mix of nationalism and Leninism). The North Korean agitprop department saw her as a godsend. Indeed, Im Su-kyŏng said exactly what South Korean students were supposed to say according to North Korean discourse. She generally followed the
suggestions of her minders and did not create much trouble. As a result, she spent 46 days touring the country and participated in many events, which were widely publicized by the official media.

However, her visit produced a somewhat surprising and unintended result. Almost all of the refugees with whom I have spoken mentioned the short visit of Im Su-kyŏng as being a pivotal event in changing perceptions of the South in North Korea. Im Su-kyŏng looked different, and, irrespective of her statements (usually parroting the North Korean propaganda), she behaved in a way which made the North Koreans question many official statements about the South. Im Su-kyŏng was clearly spontaneous, and unlike North Korea’s normal speakers at public events, she improvised her speeches. She was not afraid to break some minor rules and even at points made very mild critical remarks about organization (like complaining publically about excessive security, which prevented her from mingling with North Koreans frequently). All of this was new and shocking, like her fashionable clothes, which for many years following determined fashion trends in North Korean society.

Having completed her Pyongyang trip, Im Su-kyŏng crossed the DMZ to go back to South Korea and, as expected, was arrested immediately by the South Korean authorities. Since the notorious National Security Law makes unauthorized trips to the North illegal, she stood trial and spent several years in prison. This was when the North Korean propaganda machine would make another grave mistake. North Korean journalists used an officially approved trip to Seoul in order to meet Im Su-kyŏng’s parents in their Seoul apartment. The North Koreans were surprised to see that the family of a known political criminal was not shipped to a concentration camp (as was customary in the North) and even could continue to live in the nation’s capital and give interviews to the “enemy journalists”. This was a massive blow to the image of South Korean society as an exceptionally repressive state. North Koreans began to suspect that the ‘fascist puppet clique in Seoul’ might just be surprisingly soft on internal dissent.

Tellingly, from the mid-1990s, references to Im Su-kyŏng and her exploits all but disappeared from the North Korean media. Her views have not changed that much, she worked as a journalist, visited the North again and in April 2012 was elected a member of parliament from the centre-left Democratic Party list. Nonetheless, Im Su-kyŏng’s moderate prominence in South Korean politics has not been advertised by the North Korean media since the mid-1990s.
THE CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENT

But the real changes were to begin in the mid-1990s. By far the single most important new factor was a massive move of North Korean refugees to China. Strictly speaking, the Sino-North Korean border has never been well protected. Excessive security was seen by both sides as superfluous. Until the late 1980s, few North Koreans would consider escape to China; after all it was little different from the North in terms of political freedoms and until the mid-1980s had significantly lower living standards. At the same time, in the conditions of tight surveillance and control, typical of Mao and early post-Mao period, escapees were almost certain to be apprehended by the Chinese authorities and then extradited back to the North, where a few years of imprisonment would await them.

Things changed in the mid-1990s when cross-border movements began in earnest. Both push and pull factors were at play. North Korea at the time was experiencing a catastrophic famine and as a result, many who escaped to China did so to avoid the real threat of starvation. Concurrently, changes in China itself created manifold employment opportunities for refugees who were willing to take badly paid, unskilled jobs. As a result, the number of refugees peaked at an estimated 200,000 in 1999. Since then their number as dwindled to a mere 20-30,000.\(^8\)

It is important to remember that they constitute a floating population. Many refugees, having spent a few months or even some years in China, voluntarily return home, stay with their families for a while then go back to China again. No reliable statistics exist, but Courtland Robinson of John Hopkins University, whose group conducted systematic research on the North Korean refugee population in China, once estimated that up to half a million North Koreans have visited China up to 2009.\(^9\) Once back home, the former refugees discuss their experiences in China, so the stories of Chinese prosperity are widely known and frequently – if cautiously – discussed in North Korea. Taking into account the large number of North Koreans who have visited China, the impact of the rumours and stories is bound to be significant.

Indeed, even a short visit to China has a great impact on a refugee’s worldview, since the per capita income in the borderland


\(^9\) An oral communication with Courtland Robinson.
provinces is two or three times higher the income in North Korea (the gap is larger than gap between two Germanies in the 1980s). To the impoverished North Koreans, China looks like a land of plenty. One of my interviewees recalled how shocked she was in the late 1990s by the sight of a brightly lit evening market in what is essentially a seedy borderland Chinese town (she was taken there by her relatives virtually next day after her defection): “Everything was so fresh, so beautiful and so strange. I saw bananas and thought they must be some kind of peculiar looking cucumber”.

The impact of Chinese prosperity is further increased by recent memories of Chinese poverty. Indeed, until the late 1980s, the borderland areas of China were worse off compared to the northern parts of North Korea, and so it was customary for North Koreans to provide their Chinese relatives with some help. Indeed, many North Koreans in the northern part of the country have relatives in China. The borderland part of northeast China is largely populated by ethnic Koreans whose ancestors moved to the area in the early 1900s and who maintain relations with their relatives in North Korea. In recent years, largely thanks to massive cross border movements, North Koreans stay in constant touch with their Chinese relatives (the recent proliferation of Chinese mobile phones helps them, as well as the activities of brokers who specialize in moving people, money and letter across the border).

This news from China is widely seen as proof of the efficiency of market-style reforms (switching to a family responsibility system in agriculture, in particular). In this new situation, North Korean propaganda is compelled to look for some excuse to justify Pyongyang’s stubborn unwillingness to emulate China’s success.

China is important in itself, but it is even more significant as a conduit for information about South Korea. The borderland areas of China, where a majority of refugees reside, are much influenced by South Korean culture. Even a humble farmhouse in the area might have a satellite dish which is used to watch South Korean broadcasts, remarkably more attractive to Chinese viewers than even the contents of Chinese TV, already very free and entertaining by North Korea standards. Many ethnic Koreans in the area have visited the South in various capacities, as legal or illegal workers, students and tourists.

Therefore, every North Korean refugee in the area is almost certain to encounter stories about South Korea’s material prosperity and individual freedom – indeed, in this part of China, South Korea is almost universally perceived as the embodiment of material success. Refugee
interviewees say that back in the 1990s, it usually took a few weeks in China for them to realize that South Korea is rich beyond their imagination. In recent years, such a revelation no longer happens – North Korean refugees learn about South Korean prosperity well before they arrive in China. To a large extent, they learn it through word of mouth, but the spread of new information technologies also plays a large and important role in the spread of South Korean culture.

THE ARRIVAL OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
In a sense, the Kim family regime is unlucky. These people run a dictatorship whose internal stability depends on a self-imposed information blockade. However, they have to do it in times when maintaining such a blockade is increasingly difficult due to advances in digital and information technologies. The Kim Family Regime is fighting an uphill battle: information storage and dissemination devices are getting smaller (and also more powerful) with remarkable speed.

Historically, the first media device which managed to penetrate the North Korean isolation was radio. While the ban on tunable radio sets technically remains in effect, it has become increasingly difficult to enforce. When the ban was first adopted, the typical radio was a large, valve-based contraption virtually impossible to hide in a typical North Korean house. Over the last 15 years, small and easy-to-hide transistor radios have been smuggled into the country in unknown but significant quantities.

It seems from interviews with refugees that North Koreans still tend to perceive listening to foreign broadcasts as a dangerous and somewhat improper activity. This is a large difference with the situation in the Soviet Union of the 1970s, where for a significant number of urban families, regular listening to foreign broadcasts had become a sort of established ritual (unlike North Korea, it was perfectly legal to listen to foreign broadcasts there). A popular joke of my youth put it nicely: ‘There is a wonderful tradition in our Russia: listening to the BBC every evening’. Indeed, a 1984 research project stated that in an average week some 14–18% of adult Soviet citizens listened to the Voice of America, 7–10% to the BBC and 8–12% to Radio Liberty (these figures agree well with my own reminiscences).  

10 Michael Nelson, War of the Black Heavens: The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 163.
Nonetheless, those in North Korea who listen to foreign broadcasts tend to be those with heightened interest in political and social matters, often intellectuals and/or members of the official elite. Perhaps the real or perceived risks which are still associated with foreign broadcasts make listening to such programs appear to be a serious matter. In other words, from refugee interviews one can get the impression that the penetration rate of radios is indeed not very high, but it might still be politically the most significant form of media, since its audience largely consists of real or potential opinion makers. It also remains the only source of up-to-date political information and opinions.

In terms of the overall impact on the general populace, however, nothing can compete with the DVD player which seems to be by far the most significant tool of information dissemination in North Korea. Technically, VCRs were available in North Korea from the early 1990s, but for years this tape-based equipment was very expensive and beyond the reach of the average person. Indeed, in a country where the average monthly wage was in the region of $5 (and even less in some periods), few people were willing to pay $200 to purchase a VCR.

Things changed however around 2000. First, the North Korean market was flooded with cheap used VCRs which began to come in from China. Not long after, DVD players took hold. The cheapest DVD players are readily available at North Korean markets for $20 or less (Kretchun and Kim cite the price for a DVD player at $13, but my interlocutors usually quote somewhat higher figures). Unlike radio sets, DVD players are perfectly legal: it is officially assumed that North Koreans would purchase these contraptions to watch ideologically wholesome North Korean movies – biopics of the Great Leader and the like. In real life, there are few North Koreans who find these kinds of movies interesting, rather they use their DVD players to entertain themselves with illegally imported foreign video.

Hollywood blockbusters (many North Koreans have seen Titanic) and Hong Kong martial arts movies make up a sizable portion of the DVDs watched by northerners, as do Indian movies. However, the dominant role is that of South Korean video (both movies and TV dramas). South Korean movies are technically banned, but this ban is frequently ignored by the people and not always enforced by the authorities. This behavior might be risky, but of dozens people with whom I discussed the issue, none said that he or she personally knows somebody who got in

11 Nat Kretchun and Jane Kim, A Quiet Opening, 13.
trouble for watching South Korean movies (nearly all of them watched the forbidden videos while still in North Korea). One North Korean whom I interviewed, a minor police official in the past told of how police discovered a large shipment of South Korean DVDs in his county. The people who were smuggling these DVDs across the border were apprehended, but got very light sentences – only a few months of imprisonment. To a very large extent this was because the ring was run by the children of top officials in the county, but it is still partly indicative of the changes in North Korea’s law enforcing environment. There is little doubt that had this taken place in the 1990s, all the participants would have disappeared into a concentration camp for years and their well-placed relatives would have lost their jobs and possibly be sent to prison as well.

Unlike radio broadcasts, which form part of large-scale political campaigns being waged by South Korean and foreign governments, the proliferation of South Korean DVDs is being guided by the proverbial ‘invisible hand of the market’. First, the video is recorded by ethnic Koreans in China who often use satellite broadcasts to get the most recent episodes of TV dramas. Then the disks are smuggled across the border and are bought by wholesalers in North Korea. From there, the disks are distributed across the country.

The available data does not allow us estimate the DVD penetration rate with any precision. My North Korean interlocutors have stated many times in recent years that some three quarters of all households have a DVD player. This may, though, be a geographically biased view, since most of them come from borderland areas of North Korea, where incomes are higher and foreign influences are understandably more pronounced. Kretchun and Kim, however, come up with very similar estimates (but they admittedly dealt with a similar biased sample). According to their survey, 46% of the sample had access to the DVD players (an additional 25% had access to a VCD player – VCD technology is quite prominent in North Korea).12

Watching South Korean movies has produced much impact on North Koreans not least because these movies are clearly not a part of some deliberate propaganda efforts: it is obvious that the movies are produced exclusively for South Korean internal consumption. North Koreans might be somewhat skeptical and they might even assume that South Korean videos exaggerate the actual living standards of South

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Korea – after all, North Korean propaganda and art has always embellished life in the North. Nonetheless, there are things in the video which could not be faked for the sake of show – like, say, the skyline of Seoul, dotted with high rise buildings, bright lights and impressive bridges. As one interviewee said: “Until 2000, people believed that South Korea is a very poor country, so we felt sorry about the suffering of the South Koreans. But then people began to watch South Korea movies, so now only kids in primary schools might think that South Korea is poor”.

As a matter of fact, even primary school kids are no longer likely to receive education about the alleged poverty of South Korea. Over the last 10 years, the depiction of South Korea in North Korean propaganda has undergone a profound transformation. In North Korean propaganda South Korea is no longer presented as a destitute place. It is tacitly admitted that South Korea is quite affluent. Therefore North Korean propaganda dwells on other problems in South Korean society, real or alleged – like environmental degradation, crime, income inequality etc.\(^\text{13}\) This sea change took place exactly when the cross-border movement and the spread of new technologies began in earnest – around 2000. One can be pretty certain that this was prompted by the changes in the information environment. In the new situation, the warriors of North Korea’s agitprop department realized that they needed new weapons to counter their foe. It seems that the future has in store an even worse surprise for North Korean propaganda makers: computers, the ultimate dissemination tools, have finally arrived in North Korea.

The common image of North Korea is that of a destitute country, a sort of a sub-Saharan African nation with unusually cold weather. But this makes us forget that North Korea, in spite of being very poor indeed, is an urban society and an educated one at that. In other words, there is a significant number of North Koreans who have little problem with using computers and know perfectly well why they need to use them.

When the present author visits borderland areas of China, I go to the markets which cater for the needs of North Koreans. In recent years, one of the most notable features of such markets is a small computer shop or two. They usually sell cheap used desktop computers and notebooks. In

\(^\text{13}\) For work on the recent changes in North Korean propaganda, see publications of Tatiana Gabroussenko and Brian Myers. For example: Tatiana Gabroussenko, “From Developmentalist to Conservationist Criticism: The New Narrative of South Korea in North Korean Propaganda”, *The Journal of Korean Studies* 16 (2011), no. 1 (Spring 2011)
The summer of 2010, a used notebook in Dandong would cost less than $100. This might be a large amount of money for the average North Korean worker or farmer, but it is within the reach of a slightly corrupt official or even a moderately successful merchant, so one should not be surprised that such computers are selling like hot cakes (at least this what the shop owner told me). It is remarkable that computers are not unheard of even in small and remote towns and villages. Even a village school might nowadays have a computer or two, and relatively affluent families in the countryside often buy computers to be used as status symbols.14 As a refugee remarked: “Here in South Korea, people buy expensive foreign cars to show off. In North Korea, they buy computers and refrigerators.” As people in the above mentioned computer shops told me, North Koreans largely buy computers for two reasons – word processing and watching foreign movies and TV shows.

North Korean computers are not connected to the Internet. At best, one can use the nationwide intranet system, which is known as Kwangmyŏng, but even access to this intranet is much restricted. Nonetheless, in spite of all restrictions, computers remain powerful information technology tools. They can be used for not merely perusing but also disseminating information.

The North Korean authorities seem to understand some of the dangers which are brought by the arrival of computers. It is remarkable though that the government has not made any significant efforts to curb or restrict computer ownership. As a matter of fact, the spread of computers and computer-related knowledge has been welcomed and explicitly encouraged by the North Korean state. This might reflect the somewhat naive belief that such a spread may create the foundations for a miraculous economic breakthrough. Stalinist regimes have always been notorious for their technological fetishism – that is, belief that all their economic problems can be overcome by the discovery of a miracle technology.

To counter the potential political threats, all computers are registered and their hard drives are subject to random checks by the authorities (recently, the security bureaucracy created a special division – the so-called Bureau 27 – to monitor and control privately owned computers). Frankly, though, one should be sceptical about the

14 Remarks about the role of the computer as a status symbol: Kim Po-kŏn. “The 5 storages and 6 contraptions which serve as symbols of prosperity in North Korea,” T’ongil Hankuk 2009, no. 1.
effectiveness of such checks: a teenage computer enthusiast will always outsmart an aging policeman, especially if the latter does not see a good reason to be excessively vigilant.

CONCLUSION
Therefore it seems that the information environment has changed completely and irreversibly. The North Korean government is not happy about it and does everything it can to put the genie back in the bottle. However, these efforts are in vain – and likely to remain so.

This is not to deny that in some areas, the North Korean government can stop and even partially reverse these dangerous developments. For example, after 2008 there has been a notable decline in cross-border movements, which has been the result of a dramatic increase in border security. That said though, the North Korean government is fighting an uphill battle it is unlikely to win.

Change is especially noticeable among younger North Koreans, those now in their 20s and 30s. These people never lived in the old state socialist economy and since their teens they have been exposed to knowledge of the outside world. They are therefore likely to be skeptical about official propaganda and one might speculate that recent efforts to replace the image of poverty-stricken South Korea with that of crime-ridden South Korea is unlikely to be successful with them.

There is little doubt that in the long run such contacts will produce much political impact and perhaps will even lay the ground for a dramatic transformation of the North Korean regime (or its collapse). After all, it was the spread of information about the outside world which undermined the Soviet Union and other Communist countries in the 1980s. In this regard, one has to agree with Yale Richmond who wrote recently: “There are a few grains of truth in some of these explanations [of the Soviet collapse], and more than a few in others, but I will provide many grains of another explanation – that the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism were consequences of Soviet contacts and cultural exchanges with the West, and with the United States in particular, over the years that followed the death of Stalin in 1953.” 15

This does not mean that a North Korean revolution is around the corner (even though this might be case, revolutions are sudden events usually). The spread of knowledge about the outside world is bound to

15 Yale Richmond, “Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: How the West Won,” American Communist History 9 (2010), no. 1: 62
make North Koreans more disbelieving of the government, but this does not immediately translate into anti-government actions. There are other conditions which make a revolt possible. Nonetheless, it seems that the old information blockage has ceased to be sustainable and in spite of all efforts by the authorities, within five to ten years the majority of the North Korean population will come to realize that they are living in a very poor and unusually repressive state which is the object of contempt, pity and ridicule among their successful neighbors. This is not a discovery that the North Korean government would welcome, but it seems that it is bound to happen nonetheless.

Andrei Lankov is a professor at Kookmin University in Seoul and the author of several books and many articles on North Korean history and politics.
The Early History of Korean Electric Light and Power Development

Moon-Hyon Nam

I. INTRODUCTION
A plaque inscribed with the phrase “The Birthplace of Electricity in Korea” has recently been laid at the site of Korea’s first electric light plant (jendeungso) on the grounds of Gyeongbokgung palace in Seoul, to mark the 100th anniversary of powerhouse construction and electric lighting installation inside Geoncheonggung, the main residence of Gojong (r.1864-1897 as king, 1897-1907 as emperor). The first modern lighting came to Joseon, “The Land of Morning Calm”, just seven years after the invention of incandescent light by Thomas A. Edison. Thus, conventional royal palace lighting by candles and oil lamps was partially replaced by modern incandescent electric lights two years and four months after the Korean government ordered an electric light plant from the Edison Electric Light Company on September 4, 1884. The powerhouse was completed in January 1887 and the test operation of triple-bulb electric lamps was carried out. The exact date of the first actual use of electric lighting is not known, although January 26, 1887 is the most probable date. It was only four and half years after the opening of the Pearl Street

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1 Geoncheonggung is a building completed in 1873 inside the Gyeongbokgung palace complex.
3 US Department of State, *Despatches from the United States Ministers to Korea* (hereinafter cited as *Korea Despatches*): No. 106: Legation of the United States, Seoul, Corea, Lucius H. Foote to F. T. Frelinghuysen, Secretary of States, Washington DC, September 4, 1884.
4 C-H. Youn, *Youn Chi-ho Ilgi* (A Diary of Youn Chi-ho), vol. 1, pp.244-245, Jan. 26, 1887; W-M. Kim, “Geoncheonggung McKay jeondeungsowa hankuk
Central Station in New York.\textsuperscript{5}

In 1892, the government planned to relocate and upgrade the plant because of the noise and the need to electrify Changdeokgung, about one mile east of Gyeongbokgung.\textsuperscript{6} American electric light engineer Thomas Power was in charge of the construction of the new plant, located about midway between both palace compounds. The old plant was closed after the completion of its successor on May 30, 1894.\textsuperscript{7} This is recognized as a historic milestone that kicked off a national modernization effort in the late 19th century. In the 20th century, the plants were demolished without a trace remaining. Some documentation on the plants exists, for example Korean-U.S. and Korean-U.K. diplomatic dispatches during the construction project and subsequent operation. In 1893, Allen reported the electrical matters in Korea to Washington: “…a fine incandescent electric light plant of 750 lights from Edison Company…”\textsuperscript{8} In 1936, the Japanese reported that two 3kW dynamos were operated by a steam engine and two 100-candlepower lamps were lighted up at the palace in 1887. The site of the powerhouse was in front of the king’s residence.\textsuperscript{9}

In addition to its first lighting service within the palace, the nation’s

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\textsuperscript{6} Gyeongbokgung palace was initially built in 1395 as the main palace of the Joseon dynasty.

\textsuperscript{7} H. N. Allen, \textit{Korea: Fact and Fancy}, p. 9.


first electricity provider, the Seoul Electric Company, was launched in 1898.\textsuperscript{10} This accelerated the modernization process, which included the renovation in the capital, construction of a tramway and waterworks, and extension of electric light and power services to the public. The Seoul Electric Company managed to provide an integrated service that included street lights, telephones, and a new electric tram system.\textsuperscript{11}

The first electric light plant on the palace grounds is forgotten as the very start of electrical engineering in Korea. This paper attempts to revive the early history of Korea’s electric lights and power by providing a chronological review of electrical developments before the turn of the 20th century. The main focus is on the initial stages of the process: the establishment of the first electric light plant at the main palace in 1887 and the erection of a second plant for lighting the detached palace compound, Changdeokgung, in 1894.

II. INTRODUCTORY CONTACTS WITH ELECTRICITY

A. General Knowledge of Electricity
From the early 1860s several kinds of scientific literature published in China were introduced to Korea. Stories about electricity, electric trams and telegraphy were very popular in newspapers.\textsuperscript{12} Koreans knew about the basic theory of electricity and its application to the telegraph and weaponry, while natural electric phenomena helped them to understand electricity better. Joseon opened her ports to Japan in 1876, and Gojong began to see electricity as a symbol of national “enlightenment” and “self-strengthening.”\textsuperscript{13}

B. Observations of Electricity
Korea came in contact with electricity through Japan and China. The Joseon government sent special envoys to Japan during the 1870s and 1880s to inspect modernized schools, institutions, and industrial facilities. The members of several delegations witnessed the electric arc-lighting in
the street of Yokosuka and Tokyo. Technology trainees sent to China learned about electricity and the telegraph at the Electricity Test Station in Tianjin.\(^{14}\)

C. Interactions between Korea and the USA

The Korean Special Mission to America

Gojong realized the tremendous power of electricity through reports from his delegations and recognized that it was the only means to promote national wealth and military power. In conjunction with signing the Treaty of Friendship with Japan in 1876, the Joseon government signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the USA in 1882. It was a result of an effort to actively join international society. Lucius H. Foote was appointed the first American Minister to Joseon and opened the American legation at Jeongdong in Seoul in May 1883.

The Korean government dispatched the Joseon bobingsa, or Joseon Special Mission to America, in accordance with the terms of the treaty with the US. The delegation consisted of eight men and was lead by Chief Minister Yong-Ik Min.\(^{15}\) The general aim of the mission was not only to cement the friendship between the two countries but also to obtain American advisers, teachers, and loans.

Devil’s Light

The mission arrived in New York on September 18, 1883 via San Francisco and Chicago, and they met President Chester A. Arthur (1881-85) in New York to submit King Gojong’s letter and diplomatic credentials. They embarked on an inspection tour of modern facilities in Boston and Lowell, Massachusetts. This was the beginning of science and technology exchanges between Korea and America.\(^{16}\) In Boston, they stayed in the Hotel Vendome and visited two industrial fairs (the Foreign Exhibition and the American Exposition). Joseon had porcelain ware, and

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\(^{14}\) Ibid. pp. 63-71.

\(^{15}\) Despatches from United States Ministers to Korea, 1883-1895 (hereinafter cited as Korea Despatches), National Archives, Washington, DC: Diplomatic Records, M134, vol. 1, No. 14, “Foote to Frelinghuysen,” July 13, 1883.

this was the first Korean participation in an international fair. While touring the Equitable Building in New York, the delegation was awed by the electric lights and wrote the following: “…In Japan we saw electrical apparatus, but could not be told what (it) was, though we were left to understand that nobody knew, and that it was a force controlled by devils and not surely under human control….” They expressed their desire to introduce electrical equipment and facilities to Korea. The envoys also saw the incandescent lighting and power generation facilities at the Hotel Vendome, which were installed in 1882.

Ordering an Electric Light Plant from Edison
During their stay in New York, many entrepreneurs and merchants interested in trading with Korea visited the envoys. Among them was Everett Frazer, who was already trading with Japan and China at that time. He introduced several manufacturers and textile factories. One of these companies was the Edison Electric Company, and the delegation had a meeting to discuss an order for an electric light plant. Impressed by Frazer’s hospitality, Chief Minister Min asked him to be the Honorary Joseon General Consul in New York. Since there was no formal diplomatic consulate in Washington, the Joseon government officially assigned him as the Honorary Joseon General Consul in New York on January 17, 1884. The mission’s activity in the US provided a chance to introduce electric lighting to Korea.

III. ESTABLISHMENT AND REMOVAL OF THE POWERHOUSE

18 New York Herald, October 15, 1883.
19 Ibid.
20 Korea Despatches, vol. 1, no. 106, loc. cit.
21 Ibid., vol. 1, No.47, Mr. Lucius H. Foote to the Secretary of State, translation, January 14, 1884; Allen, Korea: Fact and Fancy, 165; Frazer served during 1884-1891, reappointed 1897.
A. Planning the Electrification of the Palace

After returning to Seoul, the envoys recommended to the king that advanced science and technology from America and Europe be introduced for the sake of national reform and enlightenment. Meanwhile, Frazer and Edison discussed the establishment and operation of electric lighting, telephone equipment and facilities in Joseon. Frazer sent a message to Minister Foote on April 16, 1884 and asked him to apply to the government for the exclusive rights regarding the electric lighting and telegraph project. Upon receiving Foote’s memorial on the electrification of the palace, the Joseon government ordered an electric light plant from the Edison Electric Light Company on September 4, 1884 via Foote. Foote reported it to the Secretary of State, F. T. Frelinghuysen, and asked him to cooperate in the installation of electric light in the palace. In response to Foote, Frelinghuysen confirmed the report. This led to a $15,500 contract between Frazer, the authorized representative of the Joseon government, and the Edison Lamp Company in October. Edison named Frazer as a general agent for his business in Joseon. Edison also assigned James R. Morse of the American Trading Company in Tokyo and Walter D. Townsend (Townsend & Co.) in Chemulpo (now Incheon) as trading agents in Korea.

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23 New York April 16, 1884. Foote, American Minister Corea, Edison requests exclusive concession of electric light (and) telephone in Corea, Frazer, In Everett Frazer Papers, Box 3, 1. Collected by The Public Library of New York City.

24 *Korea Despatches*, No. 106, loc. cit.: “Sir: On behalf of Mr. Thomas A. Edison I some time since applied for the exclusive right to place and operate electric lights and telephones in Corea; as the results of this together with the observations made by the Corean envoys while in the United States, an order has been to Mr. Edison to place his system of electric light within the palace. I have the honor to be, Sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant, Lucius H. Foote.”

25 *Diplomatic Instructions of the Department of State, 1801-1906: Korea*, vol. 1, Washington, D.C.: National Archives, Diplomatic Records, M77, (hereafter cited as *Korea Instructions*), F. T. Frelinghuysen to L. H. Foote, November 5, 1884: “Sir: I have received your No. 106 of the 4th of September last, saying that an order had been given Mr. Thomas A. Edison to place his electric lights within the palace grounds and buildings at Seoul. I am Sir, your obedient servant. Fredk. T. Frelinghuysen.”

26 *One Hundred Years*, pp. 75-76, passim.
The attempted coup d’État in Joseon on December 4, 1884 delayed the electric lighting project until June 1885. In August 1886, Frazer reported that Edison was ready to send an electric light plant to Korea, and he was waiting for the decision of the Joseon government on the invitation of an electric light instructor. The government decided to invite an electric light engineer and Edison recommended William McKay. McKay was granted a passport on September 18, 1886 and left for Joseon with his family and a mechanic in October.

B. Construction of the Electric Light Plant

McKay arrived in Seoul on November and signed a contract with the Joseon government. He started to search for a site for the powerhouse on the palace grounds and decided to locate the building between the king’s residence and the side of the lotus pond, which would supply water for the boiler, and to install power lines for the electric lights. From December 1886 through January 1887, McKay erected a one-story frame building on a hill overlooking the lotus pond. The building had an approximate area of 30ft × 80ft and was divided into an engine and dynamo room, and a room for the boiler.

An electric light plant arrived in Japan from the US in early November. The Joseon government paid $12,179.87, the balance owed to the Townsend & Co., and took possession of it. The plant was then carried

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28 Koreans called the electric light engineer the “electric light teacher” and the Americans referred to the position as “government electrician.”


30 Collections of Major Documents, pp. 48-49: Depending on the interview with former court lady Ahn, “…Western-style building erected by the western was located somewhere between the well for the King and Chuihyangkyo the bridge of lotus pond…”

31 It may be similar to Sunbury central station opened on July 4, 1883 by Edison himself, see F. Jehl, Menlo Park Reminiscences, vol. 3 (Dearborn, Mich.: Edison Institute, 1941), pp. 1089-1119.

32 Despatches from the United States Minister to Korea, vol. 1, 1883-1890.
by sea from Nagasaki to Incheon and up the Han River to Seoul.

**Boiler**
Steam was supplied by a coal-fired 80-hp boiler. Edison adopted the Babcock & Wilcox model to his systems from early on, observing that, “It is the best boiler that God has permitted man yet to make.” Thus it may be assumed that McKay installed a Babcock & Wilcox boiler at his powerhouse.

**Steam Engine**
There are several reports about the steam plant: one electric light plant for lighting 750-incandescent lamps,\(^3^3\) two 3kW dynamos (and a steam-engine).\(^3^4\) It is inferable that the steam plant consisted of a high-speed (Armington & Sims) engine having two flywheels, each of which was belted with a 3kW class Edison dynamo. In the Pearl Street station, Edison adopted 125-hp Armington & Sims engines capable of running at 350 rpm and linked his dynamos because of the ease of speed regulation. At Sunbury, he also belted his “L” dynamo with a high-speed Armington & Sims engine having two flywheels.\(^3^5\) The engine was well matched with various Edison dynamos and thereafter became his favorite. The Armington & Sims Company produced small engines: two flywheels, a 9.5" bore and 10" stroke, producing 50-hp at 350 rpm with 175 psi of steam.\(^3^6\) Edison probably sent an Armington & Sims engine for use at the Joseon powerhouse.

**Dynamo and Three-Wire System**
As mentioned above, two 3kW Edison dynamos were belted to a steam engine. In the early stage of the Edison Isolated Lighting System, the dynamos were long-legged Mary types. These were replaced by shortened bipolar generators, i.e. the Edison dynamo of 1886, and these were installed in the Edison system of central station lighting. The first operating manual of the Edison dynamos in the central station was published in 1886. Edison arranged two generators in series to provide

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\(^3^4\) *Collections of Major Documents*, loc. cit.
\(^3^6\) The New England Wireless and Steam Museum (NEWSM), Inc. at 1300 Frenchtown Road, East Greenwich, RI, Robert W. Merriam, Director.
220V in outside wires and a neutral wire between the generators acted as a compensating conductor. This was a three-wire system which was first installed at Sunbury and elsewhere afterward.\(^\text{37}\) It is inferable that two dynamos were connected in series, and that three wires led to simple bus bars at the powerhouse.

**Lighting Installations**

News reports on the lighting installations mentioned that 750 incandescent lamps,\(^\text{38}\) two 100-candlepower arc-lamps, one for the search light and the other for the fore-garden,\(^\text{39}\) and 5-bulb electric lamps had arrived.\(^\text{40}\) Based on the capacity of the dynamos, 120, 16-candlepower and 100-candlepower arc-lamps were deployed on the palace grounds. The dynamo might have had a capacity of 60, 16-candlepower bamboo filament lamps each, thus giving a capacity of 120 lamps to the station. A three-wire distribution panel stood in front of the dynamos, and three wires from the dynamo were for the lamps in the king’s and queen’s residential area and around the palace.

**C. First Class in East Asia**

**The Death of McKay**

According to a letter to Edison from Francis Upton, superintendent of the Edison Lamp Company, the Korean plant was one of the first-class plants in East Asia, along with the one in the Japanese emperor’s palace, and it would be a model plant for future business in China.\(^\text{41}\) The plant was fully functional and performed satisfactorily.\(^\text{42}\)

On March 9, 1887, McKay died after being shot with a revolver by Korean assistant Ki-Su (Kim). The assistant was arrested and tried. This aroused diplomatic problems between the two countries because McKay was an invited government electrician. The US legation concluded that

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\(^{37}\) *Brief Instructions for Operating Edison Dynamos in Central Station* (New York City: Edison Electric Light Co., 1886).

\(^{38}\) Allen, op. cit.

\(^{39}\) *Collections of Major Documents*, loc. cit., passim.

\(^{40}\) *Asahi Shinbun*, Jan. 16, 1887.

\(^{41}\) Harrison, NJ, April 18, 1887. “Dear Mr. Edison ….We shall not loose in the end I think as we shall have a first-class plant and this with the one in the Mikado Palace in Japan will be only first-class plants in the East. … Francis R. Upton.”

the assistant was not guilty and did not want him to be punished. At American minister Rockhill’s request, the Joseon government decided to free the assistant.\textsuperscript{43}

William McKay was born in Scotland in 1863 and resided in Warwick, Rhode Island. Before coming to Joseon he worked at a textile printing factory.\textsuperscript{44} He was a benefactor who brought modern lighting to Korea. Upon receiving the sad news, Gojong expressed his deep sorrow, paid the funeral expenses, and consoled the family by providing money for housing and education.

\textit{Operations after McKay}

The powerhouse was halted until the government invited new electric light “teachers,” Pyirre and Forsyth, in August from England through the mediation of the USA.\textsuperscript{45} Their duty was to re-start the powerhouse, operate the plant and manage the electric light facilities. The government asked them to train Korean students to run the powerhouse in the future. For operating the powerhouse, Pyirre and an assistant were enough, so the government discharged Forsyth on February 12, 1889. Pyirre served until August 1889 with a Korean assistant,\textsuperscript{46} and American electrical engineer Payne was then invited, serving two years as his successor.\textsuperscript{47} Another American, Thomas W. Power, succeeded Payne from 1891. Power had worked at the Shareham Hotel in Washington before coming to Seoul and was an excellent electrical engineer.\textsuperscript{48}

The public attitude toward electric lights was not very welcoming,

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\textsuperscript{44} 1880 Census Information enumerated on the 12th day of June, 1880.


\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Joseon Diplomatic Documents}, vol. 1, p. 292, no. 535, September 26, 1888; p. 294, no. 538, October 1, 1888; p. 295, no. 539, October 1, 1888.

\textsuperscript{47} By the appointment letter to Payne on August 3, 1889, salary was 250 Mexican dollars and in addition to the salary 500 dollars will be paid to Frazer Company in Yokohama via Bank of Japan after expiration of the contract.

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{U.S. Consul Dispatches}, vol. 1, no. 36: Acting Minister and Consul General to Korea Augustine Heard to Assistant Secretary of State, December 31, 1892.
and many protested the high cost of using them.\textsuperscript{49} On the other hand, electric lights were a source of curiosity, and some called then “marvelous fire” or “moolbul - water fire” because the electricity came from the water of the lotus pond and people believed the light was made from the water.

\textbf{D. New Plant Construction and Old Plant Closure}

\textit{New Building}

In 1892, the Joseon government wanted to upgrade the obsolete powerhouse and electrify the detached palace, Changdeokgung, which was about a mile away. The Workshop Office of the Department of Interior signed a contract with the American Trading Company to purchase a new installation. Thomas W. Power was dispatched to America to select the new equipment from various places. It was shipped to Kobe, Japan, where it was met by Power and carried by Korean steamer to Chemulpo on June 1, 1893. After payment was completed, it was brought 60 miles upriver to Seoul on small river junks. After unloading at the landing, the equipment had to be carried by bull cart four miles into the city. The cost of the plant was some $31,000 in gold, including freight and shipping charges.\textsuperscript{50} The original plan was to extend the present powerhouse by adding new equipment only. Considering the noise problem and design issues related to the extension plan, the new plant was installed in an empty building originally built as an arsenal and equipped with machinery for manufacturing weapons in 1883. The building stood about midway between the two palace complexes, necessitating the building of transmission lines and making the plant really a control station.

\textit{New Plant Facilities}

According to Allen’s report, the new plant consisted of steam and electrical generating facilities with 240-hp output, capable of lighting two

\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Gojong sillok} (Veritable Records King Gojong): vol. 24, March 29, 1887; vol. 26, October 7, 1887, passim.

thousand 16-candlepower incandescent lamps. It was almost twenty times larger in capacity than the old one.\textsuperscript{51}

\textit{Boiler Plant}

The boiler plant consisted of three 80-hp boilers, which were made of steel and of the horizontal pin, tubular type. They were connected to be run independently and/or together as required. The wrought iron smokestack was 90ft high and 4ft in diameter; fabricated in sections to facilitate shipment by Thos. C. Bassnor Co. of Baltimore. The boilers were fed by a Warthington steam pump made in Brooklyn. The feed water heater was an upright cylinder enclosing two brass coils, thereby improving fuel efficiency. This was made by the National Pipe Bending Co. in New Haven.

\textit{Engine Plant}

The engine plant consisted of two horizontal high-speed engines of the straight line type. Each could produce 100 horsepower, had two driving pulleys, and were connected directly to two dynamos by belts. They were built by the Syracuse Engine Works of Syracuse.

\textit{Dynamo Plant}

The dynamo plant consisted of four generators that could generate enough current to power 2,000 16-candlepower incandescent lamps, each dynamo having capacity for 500 lamps or 250A. These 125V, DC compound-wound generators were arranged to run either independently or together, as required. They were built by the United States Electric Lighting Co. in New York City.

\textit{Switchboard}

All the instruments, controllers and main switches were attached to a 10ft x 8ft main switchboard made in sections of well-seasoned cherry. This was the control center for the entire plant at all times, each dynamo having an independent voltmeter-ammeter, circuit breaker, rheostat and main switch. All instruments and switches were set on marble bases. The switchboard and instruments were made by the Westinghouse Manufacturing and Electric Co. of Pittsburgh.

\textit{Lighting Fixtures and Wire}

The electroliers and fixtures were made by the Philadelphia Fixture Co. The wire was supplied by the American Wire Co. of New York City, while the tools and other articles were purchased at various places in New York City.

**Plant Operation**

The new plant was completed under Power’s supervision on May 30, 1894. It was a modern, economic system designed for simplicity and durability. The government had Power train Korean students to operate the plant once he was gone. Power resigned on July 20, 1894 after the successful opening and returned to America in January 1895. Subsequently, the powerhouse was operated by Korean engineers. The old plant had been in operation for seven years, since 1887, with good results. With the opening of a new plant, the main buildings in the detached palace were lighted.

Lighting the royal palaces was the basic approach by which modern electric light was first introduced to Korea, Japan and China. The demand for electric light and electricity increased with modernization, and having electric lights and electricity available was expected to promote modernization and provide economic benefits to people in cities as well as in the palace compounds. Experience gained from the electric lighting in the palaces led Emperor Gojong to establish the Seoul Electric Company in 1898.

Illustrations

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52 Ibid.; *Korean-American Relations*, vol. 1, Legation of the United States, Seoul Korea April 5, 1894, no. 549, Secretary of State, Sir: Replying to your No. 202 of Nov. 20, I regret to say that it is impossible to make clear to the Koreans, the matter of electrical measurements. A considerable course in electrical education will be necessary before the matter can be apprehended. H. N. Allen.


Fig. 1. Three major figures involved in electrification of Joseon: Gojong (left), American Minister Foote (upper right) and Dr. Allen (lower right).

Fig. 2. Joseon Special Mission at New York on September 26, 1883.

55 Notes from the Korean Legation in the United States to the Department of State, 1883-1906, Diplomatic Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C.: M166, Percival Lowell to the Secretary of State, September 30, 1883, “Chosunese Special Mission.”
Fig. 3. Babcock and Wilcox boiler (restored boiler room, Dearborn, MI.)

Fig. 4. Two-flywheel Armington & Sims engine. (By permission from NEWSM)
Fig. 5. Edison dynamo of 1886.

Fig. 6. Electric light plant installation arrangement and three-wire connection diagram—plan view (Redrawn based on Jehl.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{56} F. Jehl, op. cit., p. 1099.
Fig. 7. A view from top of the Geoncheonggung toward lotus pond (O. N. Denny, 1887). The powerhouse was located next to the lower right pole.

Fig. 8. Street-light in front of Queen’s residence. (Reprinted from Holms.)
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Fig. 9. Map of northern area of Seoul. The new plant (2-3-D-E) was erected in 1894 about halfway between Gyeongbokgung (3-C-D), where the first electric light plant was erected in 1887, and Changdeokgung (3-F).

Fig. 10. Main Audience Hall, Changdeokgung after electrification.

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Moon-Hyon Nam received a Ph.D. degree in Electrical Engineering from Yonsei University, Seoul, in 1975. He has been a professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering at Konkuk University, Seoul, since 1976. He is the founding director of the Research Center for the History of Technology at Konkuk University (1993), and founding President of the Korean Society for History of Technology and Industry (1999), and he served as an International Scholar for the Society for the History of Technology (SHOT). He is the author of several books. He is currently a member of the Cultural Heritage Committee at the Cultural Heritage Administration.
History of Korean Electric Light and Power
Scandals and Gossip in Joseon Korea

Robert Neff

Throughout the 1880s and well into the 1890s, the small Western community in Seoul had, for the most part, a relatively quiet social life. Socializing was simple: church services on Sunday, tea parties at the Seoul Union throughout the week, holiday galas held at the legations, and picnics in the surrounding countryside.

The few visitors who came to the city were forced to stay with friends or at their own legations because the city had no hotels deemed suitable for Westerners. Unlike the port city of Chemulpo, there was no real transient population in Seoul—the legation guards. The sailors and marines summoned by the various foreign representatives to act as legation guards provided not only protection but also a welcome influx of new people to socialize with. Their arrival allowed sporting events such as baseball, cricket and soccer to be organized, impromptu concerts held, and the tea parties were abuzz with news from around the Far East.

There was something else that the Western community enjoyed—gossip. While Americans were not the only ones to gossip, they were, apparently unlike their European peers, willing to repeat it in letters, diaries, books and newspaper articles. While much of this gossip has little or no historical or political relevance, it does provide us with a peek of the social life in the Western communities in Korea at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries.

One of the most prolific gossipers was undoubtedly Horace N. Allen.

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1 An earlier version of this article, entitled “Jeongdong in the 1900s: The Great Han Empire Meets the World,” was presented at an international conference in the Seoul History Museum, Oct. 13, 2011.
2 An early hotel was established in Seoul by the Korean government in 1884 but was only in operation for a short time. Robert Neff, “Foreigners’ Records of Seoul’s First Hotel in the 1880s,” Korea Times, Sept. 9, 2010.
Allen first came to Korea in 1884 as a missionary doctor but eventually gave up evangelism and medicine for the role of diplomat. Fortunately for us, Allen tended to be very undiplomatic in his personal correspondence.

Allen described the foreign communities in the Far East as being the same as they were in the United States. Many of the residents were God-fearing men, successful and with families, but there were also men who were relatively young and easily swayed by the actions of their elder associates. ³

Allen was especially critical of missionaries. As a missionary, he was notoriously cantankerous, easily offended and argued continuously with his missionary peers. As a diplomat, his rhetoric was somewhat toned down but he was still very patronizing and, to some degree, fairly astute.

He noted that some missionaries remained aloof in an effort to keep themselves uncontaminated by the depraved behavior of the rest of the community. Allen claimed that their “austerity ostracized” them and made them “an object of ridicule” of their own countrymen. ⁴ In turn, the missionary pariahs often wrote letters home—and in many cases to the newspapers and government officials—complaining of the depravities they had witnessed amongst the members of their small community.

RELATIONSHIPS AND INFIDELITIES
What were some of these depravities? The missionaries with their Victorian morality were naturally offended by the perceived sexual depravity going on around them. Not only were they offended by the loose morals of their Korean hosts—kisaeng and concubines—but also by their fellow Westerners.

One such incident concerned the alleged sexual activities of the German representative, Ferdinand Krien. In the winter of 1888 the wife of Owen Denny, an American advisor to the Korean government, began spreading rumors among the handful of American missionary women that Krien was orchestrating orgies in the German legation. Krien was subsequently made a pariah of the community. After Krien became aware of the rumors, he threatened to sue Mrs. Denny for slander and was only placated after she apologized and disavowed the veracity of the rumors. It was only later learned that the origin of the rumors was Mrs. Weber, the

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Russian representative’s wife, who apparently did not like Krien. It is interesting to note that shortly afterwards the German Club, the first gentleman’s club, was established in Seoul and, undoubtedly, missionaries were not members.

Of course, there were other incidents of sexual indiscretion. The scandalous conduct of Clare Hillier, wife of the English representative to Korea, undoubtedly set the community abuzz with gossip but, for the most part, went unrecorded. Clare was a beautiful woman and was the center of attention and seemed to be ill-suited for Walter, her husband, who was too preoccupied with his studies to lavish much attention upon her. According to one of Walter’s contemporaries, “She was fond of gaiety and pleasure while he was subject to fits of morose temper and was too much occupied with Chinese to be much with her.”

She did, however, make up for it by finding other males to provide her company. One such young man was Harry S. Saunderson, a member of the Korean Customs Department in Seoul. Their relationship apparently began shortly after he arrived in Seoul in 1892 and climaxd when they ran away to England, forcing Walter to divorce her.

But the British were not the only ones prone to this type of scandalous behavior. The second wife of American businessman H. Collbran vied with her step-daughter for the attention of Count Ugo Francesetti di Malgra, the Italian representative to Korea. According to Allen, the Collbran marriage was a “queer thing” and despite his wife’s dalliance with others, Collbran remained forgiving and “completely infatuated” with her. She, on the other hand, was far from forgiving.

William Franklin Sands was a young American bachelor who came to Korea in 1898 as the secretary of the American legation and later (1899) served as an advisor to the Korean government. In 1902 he had a young Japanese girlfriend known as Miss Butterfly. Sands, like a great many other young men, was infatuated with her and paid her more than just attention. Miss Butterfly, however, was interested in Gordon Paddock, who also worked in the American legation. One day she had a servant take

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5 Robert D. Neff and Sunghwa Cheong, Korea Through Western Eyes (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 2009), 203-208.
7 Sir Charles Addis to Mr. Mills, Oct. 21, 1896, PPMS 14 67/122 (Box 8), SOAS Archives.
a package to Gordon but the servant misunderstood the name and instead took it to the Collbran residence, where Mrs. Collbran opened it. Mrs. Collbran was livid to discover a beautiful kimono and a card from “Miss Butterfly” professing her love and promptly took her wrath out upon her bewildered husband. According to Allen, Collbran “was under the doctor’s care for three days.”

There were other relationships that were looked down upon by more polite society. Percival Lowell, an American who stayed in Korea during the winter of 1883/1884, was alleged to have impregnated his Korean mistress. What became of her is unknown. The French representative to Korea, Collin de Plancy, reportedly took a Korean palace woman with him back to France in the early 1890s. She supposedly became so homesick that she returned to Seoul but found little happiness. Her relationship with the Frenchman had poisoned her social standing and, unable to endure it, she committed suicide. The daughter of Jonathon Hunt, the British Commissioner of Customs at Pusan, is said to have had a secret relationship with one of the Korean staff. After she became pregnant, Hunt, unable to endure the shame the birth would bring, gave up his position and moved to Hong Kong. What became of the baby, if there ever was one, is unclear.

One particularly sad incident involved Charles F. Chase, an American gold miner employed by the Seoul Mining Company, and his Japanese mistress, a woman named Kimeno. Like many of the gold miners, Chase lived with his mistress at the mine but at some point they became estranged and she left him, possibly finding companionship with another Western gold miner. Kimeno later denied she had another lover and claimed that the only reason she had left Chase was because he was unable to give her all the money she wanted.

Unfortunately for Chase and Kimeno, it was soon discovered that she was pregnant. In April 1908, at the Palace Hotel in Seoul, she gave birth to a fair-haired, blue-eyed daughter named Ethel. There were problems almost immediately. Because of their estranged relationship, Kimeno was unable to care for the baby by herself and Chase apparently waffled between giving Ethel up for adoption to his friend, John Kavanaugh, and trying to make things work between himself and Kimeno and possibly

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9 Ibid.
10 It should be noted that the three incidents cannot be verified.
11 John Kavanaugh to Charles F. Chase, Jan. 7, 1910, Chase Archives.
12 John Kavanaugh to Charles F. Chase, April 24, 1908, Chase Archives.
marrying her. Kimeno’s family wanted her to return to Japan where they had already chosen a Japanese man for her to marry.  

Like Chase, Kimeno was confused as to what to do. She threatened to go to the Japanese and American consuls and have them do what they could to solve the problem—an act that Kavanaugh, who had his own personal agenda, encouraged her not to do. Kavanaugh was under the impression that it would cause trouble for all. Apparently Kimeno was unwilling to give up her daughter and was trying to pressure Chase into marrying her, which he was reluctant to do.

In early December 1908, Kimeno returned to Hiroshima, Japan with her daughter. Her homecoming was greeted with little enthusiasm. Judging from Kavanaugh’s accounts, Kimeno was thrown out by her family and no one would marry her due to all the talk of the light-haired Ethel. Making matters worse, Kimeno was soon hospitalized and it was feared that she would lose one of her legs. Fortunately, she recovered.

In January 1910, Kimeno and Ethel returned to Korea and took up residence with Chase at the gold mine. In a letter to Kavanaugh, Chase wrote: “Yes the girl and baby are with me now and I am happy it is so. The baby is big and handsome and very smart. Thinks the world of me. Kimie is also happy and contented.” Their happiness was short-lived. On January 30, 1910, following “a sudden attack of apoplexy,” Chase died. He was buried three days later. What became of Kimeno and Ethel is unknown.

Not all such relationships were sordid and filled with sorrow. The marriage between the German Minister to China, Maximilian von Brandt, and Helene Heard, the daughter of Augustine Heard, the American Minister to Korea, was the subject of gossip not only in Seoul but in China and Germany as well.

Brandt first met and fell in love with Heard while she and her family were visiting him in China in 1891. Helena was only 23 years old at the time and Brandt was about 56. The discrepancy in their ages did not matter to them, but Helena’s mother was dismayed and thought it

13 John Kavanaugh to Charles F. Chase, May 23, 1908, Chase Archives.
14 John Kavanaugh to Charles F. Chase, July 27, 1908, Chase Archives.
15 John Kavanaugh to Charles F. Chase, Sept. 6, 1908, Chase Archives.
16 John Kavanaugh to Charles F. Chase, July 5, 1909, Chase Archives.
18 John Kavanaugh to Charles F. Chase, Jan. 7, 1910, Chase Archives.
“dreadful.” She eventually gave in and gave her blessing for the wedding.  

German senior diplomats were required to obtain permission from the German emperor before they were allowed to marry. Augustine and Brandt agreed to keep the engagement a secret within the family until the emperor granted approval. In this way they hoped to prevent scandalous rumors and give Helena an opportunity to reconsider the marriage. Augustine failed. Helena never reconsidered and nothing could stop the rumors. “It has become town talk and I hardly dare put my nose out of the door,” Helene bitterly complained in a letter to her sister. Despite the gossip, most of the community seemed to look favorably upon the wedding.  

The German emperor did not. Brandt’s request for permission to marry was denied, leaving him shocked and angry. He had faithfully served his government for 33 years, but he was determined to marry Helena regardless of what it might cost him. He therefore promptly resigned. The couple was married in Seoul in April 1893. The wedding ceremony took place at both the German and American legations and was a social success. It was also a romantic example of what a man is willing to give up in the name of love.

ALCOHOL

Despite the large number of missionaries in Korea, alcohol was often served at many social gatherings. The elderly Elizabeth Greathouse was known for her passion of bourbon and her son, Clarence R. Greathouse, the American legal advisor to the Korean government, often performed his duties drunk. According to Sands, “He was a first-rate lawyer, rarely sober, but a remarkable man. The drunker he got the more lucid he became. Nothing he drank ever muddled his brain, though it might paralyse his body.”  

While Greathouse was capable of functioning well when drunk, others were not. William H. Parker, the American representative to Korea

20 Augustine Heard to his daughter Amy, July 19, 1892, Robert Grey Collection.
21 Helene (Max) Heard to Augustine Heard, July 13, 1892, Robert Grey Collection.
22 Augustine Heard to his daughter Amy, Aug. 10 and Sept. 16, 1892, Robert Grey Collection.
in 1886, was a notorious alcoholic who was quickly removed from his post both for his incompetence and the embarrassment that he caused the United States government. In fact, many of the American legation’s employees were alcoholics—including the constables. One early resident of the American legation’s jail was able to walk out of his cell and escape, possibly due to the drunken state of his guard.\textsuperscript{24}

Those typically employed as legation guards—sailors and marines summoned during political unrest—were also guilty of drunken indiscretions. During the winter of 1894-95, the American warship \textit{USS Baltimore} provided the guard for the American legation and quickly found itself in hot water, both in Korea and in Washington DC. One sailor deserted his post, sold his rifle to a Japanese merchant for ten dollars and went on a twelve-day-drinking-spree before returning to the legation. For his “irresistible urge for drink” he was sentenced to five years imprisonment.\textsuperscript{25}

At about the same time a letter was received in Washington DC in which an unnamed missionary wrote, “We have to blush for our American soldiers and some of the officers from the Baltimore. They get beastly drunk and carouse about the streets in a most disgraceful manner, frightening and surprising the [Japanese] and Koreans.”\textsuperscript{26}

The American Minister to Korea, John Sill, investigated the matter and discovered that it was Rose Moore, the wife of Rev. Samuel Moore, who had written the letter. Rev. Moore, who has been described as being “sometimes more zealous than wise”, defended his wife’s claims but, unable to provide evidence, was forced to recant the charges.\textsuperscript{27} Sill in his personal correspondence denounced Moore as a “holy liar.”\textsuperscript{28}

**GAMBLING**

Gambling was also a problem among the non-missionary males. The Cercle Diplomatique et Consulaire Club, the successor of the German Club and predecessor of the Seoul Club, was the ideal location for men to gather, smoke, drink and play poker. According to Sands, “At five o’clock

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 82-83.

\textsuperscript{25} Sallie Beaumont Sill to Joseph Sill, Dec. 16, 1894, Sill Archives.

\textsuperscript{26} Jeffery Dorwart, \textit{The Pigtail War} (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1975), 63-64.

\textsuperscript{27} Martha Huntley, \textit{To Start a Work} (Seoul: Publishing House Presbyterian Church of Korea, 1987), 217.

\textsuperscript{28} John Sill to Joseph Sill, Feb. 10, 1895, Sill Archives.
the juniors and most of the bachelor elders gathered at the club, for billiards, cocktails and our one card game, poker. Our poker games were continuous. In fact it was innocuous as long as it remained among ourselves. We signed small notes for the amounts lost and once a month sent them through the clearing house. If one of us had notes that seemed too large, we held back and waited till his winnings helped to balance, and cashed the little ones.”

Even though they were friendly games, sometimes friends as well as money were lost. Raymond Krumm, a young hothead from Ohio working as an engineer for the Korean government, accused Chemulpo-based American businessman David Deshler—also from Ohio—of concealing an ace up his sleeve during one of their poker games. Their friendship ended in death threats and the intervention of the American legation.

Losses sometimes quickly added up until they were nearly impossible to pay off, as was the case with Sands. In his book *Undiplomatic Memories*, Sands glossed over his own heavy losses by merely declaring them as “small notes,” but in truth he had racked up thousands of dollars of gambling debts. In December 1902, Allen calculated that Sands was over 30,000 yen (about 15,000 dollars) in debt, including the thousands he owed in poker chits. He was so far in the hole that people stopped playing cards with him, believing he would never be able to back his losses. At the time he was working for the Korean government as an advisor with a monthly salary of 300 yen, but he also had a Japanese mistress, “Miss Butterfly,” who demanded 700 yen a month in support. The stress of his debts became so severe for Sands that some fellow Westerners feared he might commit suicide and even “kill off several others first just for company.”

**MISSIONARIES**

Missionaries also had their problems in Korea. During the Baby Riots of 1888, Horace N. Allen, then serving as the Secretary to the Korean Legation in the United States, claimed that “the Koreans firmly believe that the young boys at Underwood’s house are for purposes unnatural.”

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29 Sands, 114.
30 Neff and Cheong, 172.
32 Horace N. Allen to Edwin V. Morgan, May 1, 1903, Allen Archives.
33 Neff and Cheong, 114; Huntley, 132-133.
It is interesting to note that one of the boys at the institute had been dismissed after being caught in an act of sodomy with one of the servants, which may have given rise to the rumors. Allen suggested that all missionaries assigned to Korea should be married so as to alleviate any speculation as to their morals.

Dr. Charles W. Power arrived in Korea in November 1888 and was warmly welcomed by the small foreign community despite the rumors that he partook of alcohol and gambled while on the steamship from the United States. But he was good-natured and a hard worker and these idle rumors were quickly dismissed—until six months later when it was alleged that he had “broken the Sabbath and had had ‘criminal intercourse with women.””[^34] Power eventually admitted that he had shared two quarts of beer while on a fishing trip with Korean friends but denied breaking the Sabbath and offered no explanation to the serious charge of “criminal intercourse with women.” He was promptly recalled from Korea.

Perhaps one of the most infamous was Charles H. Irvin, a missionary doctor who arrived in Korea in 1893 and was later assigned to Pusan, where he established one of the best medical facilities in Korea. Irvin’s excellent work in Korea cannot be disputed nor can it be marred with his faults. Among these faults were his snake-oil peddling, his greed and his infidelity to his wife. When their son was of school age, she accompanied him to the United States and then returned to Korea where “she found herself literally locked out of the house. Irvin married his Korean sweetheart and resigned from the mission. He stayed on in Korea for many years in private practice, becoming a wealthy man.”[^35]

**CLOSING**

For the most part, the aforementioned individuals were all successful and important personalities, pillars of the Western community in Korea, whose names and accomplishments can be found in the numerous publications of the period. It was not the intention of this article to disparage these people *per se* but merely to show that every man has a past—one that he doesn’t always show to his friends.

Robert Neff is a freelance writer and historical researcher specializing in Korean history during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

[^34]: Huntley, 150-151.
[^35]: Ibid., 391.
The Imch'ŏnggak, Neo-Confucian Aesthetics, and Architecture Parlante

Understanding Traditional Korean Architectural Design Philosophy through Analogous Eighteenth-Century Architectural Theory

Pablo N. Barrera

I. Introduction

The term “architecture parlante” (“narrative” architecture) was coined to describe the architectural philosophy of French Neo-Classical architect, Claude-Nicholas Ledoux (1736 - 1806), an architect who gained fame under the regime of Louis XV. Ledoux’s first significant, public commission was for the Royal Salt-works at Arc-et-Sénans near Besançon, France, in the early 1770’s. For this commission, Ledoux came to envision a “perfect” circular city, which he named Chaux (Fig. 1). Ledoux introduced the concept of architecture parlante through the conceptual premise of his architectural designs for the proposed city of Chaux. Under this concept, architecture was to be designed so as to express, or “speak,”

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1 In his article, “Three Revolutionary Architects, Boullée, Ledoux and Lequeu,” Emil Kaufmann includes the following citation as proof of the earliest attribution of the term “architecture parlante” to Ledoux: ‘Etudes d’architecture en France, Magasin Pittoresque, 388, 1852, “ Ledoux was a proponent of what we have called “narrative” architecture* (Ledoux était partisan de ce qu’on a appelé depuis l’architecture parlante).” For further reference, please consult: Emil Kaufmann, “Three Revolutionary Architects, Boullée, Ledoux and Lequeu,” Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series, 42: 3 (1952), 441.

*All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

to the intended function of the structure. Some of Ledoux’s notable plans include buildings such as the River Inspector’s Residence that straddles the River Loue and the Oikema: a four-storied building “devoted to sex education as a preparation for marriage,” shaped like a phallus (Fig 2, 3). Ledoux not only designed the salt-works factory to express an “ideal” city (in this case, perfection being represented by a geometrically precise circle), but he also paid close attention to the design of other buildings, such as residences and theaters, that would contribute to and enrich urban life.  

The concept of architecture parlante is seen as inherited and further elaborated in the works of later Neo-Classical architects, such as Etienne-Louis Boullée (1728 - 1799). The spherical, globe-shaped design for the Newton Memorial (Cénotaphe de Newton) has received considerable attention among Boullée’s Enlightenment-inspired designs (Fig. 4). As homage to the physicist’s discovery of gravity, the cenotaph’s “armillary sphere” is based on Copernicus’ heliocentric system, and is an expression of speaking architecture. Through their essays and designs, Boullée and Ledoux envisioned architecture as speaking to its crucial function as a socio-cultural space, but also to the vision and ideas unique to the architect himself. Although these ideas flourished, the resulting architectural plans never became realized as tangible monuments,

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8 In Boullée’s introduction to Architecture: Essai sur L’Art, he elevates architecture as the form of art that provides the most immediate benefits in terms of its function to protect man and the existence of society, but also as a space where all other cultural arts can be conceived of and develop (En effet, l’architecture est de tous les arts celui qui procure à l’homme les avantages les plus immédiats...l’homme lui doit sa conservation; la société son existence; tous les arts leur naissance et leurs développements...). For further reference, please consult: Etienne Louis Boullée, Architecture, Essai Sur L'art (Paris: Hermann, 1968), 4.
and only the published texts and illustrations of Boullée and Ledoux remain.\textsuperscript{9} 

\textit{Architecture parlante} is not a unique approach to architectural design. Whether through independent discovery or cross-cultural borrowing, the vision that Ledoux and Boullée developed had already been conceptualized and realized two centuries earlier in Neo-Confucian, Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1910) Korea. While aesthetically unexpected for these Neo-Classical Frenchmen, during the Chosŏn period, Ledoux and Boullée would have found an example of architecture theoretically resonant with their philosophy within the design of the upper-class residence of the Kosŏng Yi (고성 이) clan called the Imch’ŏnggak (臨淸閣, 임청각). The Imch’ŏnggak was built in the sixteenth century and has buildings that are formed in the shape of Chinese characters. According to Ledoux, typical contemporaneous architects suffered from a so-called aversion to “ideas, dimension and points of view” in their designs. Ledoux would have lauded the proposed and executed design by the Chosŏn Dynasty architect of the Imchŏnggak as unhindered with such concerns, resulting in his injecting into the Neo-Confucian world a new conception of architectural design.\textsuperscript{10}

This paper will examine the concept of “\textit{architecture parlante}” in relation to how it conveys the perceived value and purpose of the Chinese writing system on part of the residents of the Imch’ŏnggak. Specifically, the focus will be on how particular Neo-Confucian


\textsuperscript{10} In his introduction to \textit{L'architecture Considérée Sous Le Rapport De L'art, Des Moeurs Et De La Législation}, Ledoux bemoans the typical disposition of the architect, “The architect is almost always embarrassed about the idea, the dimension, the point of view; the same framework is rarely at his disposal (L'Architecte est presque toujours gêné sur la pensée, la dimension, le point de vue; le cadre même est rarement à sa disposition.), and who, if he is able to overcome such obstacles, could “subject the world to the desires of novelty that provoke the sublime dangers of imagination (...il peut assujettir le monde entier aux desirs de la nouveauté qui provoque les hazard sublimes de l'imagination). For further reference, please consult: Claude Nicolas Ledoux, \textit{L'architecture Considérée Sous Le Rapport De L'art, Des Moeurs Et De La Législation}. 2nd ed. (Nördlingen [Germany]: Alfons Uhl, 1984) 28-29.
ideologies and socio-cultural notions of status are communicated through the choice to use Chinese characters, as well as the attribution of specific Chinese characters to distinct quarters within this residence.

II. The Imch’ǒnggak: An Overview of its Architectural and Historical Context

The Imch’ǒnggak is located in present-day Andong, South Korea (Fig. 5). This residence still stands in its original location and was built in 1519 by Yi Myǒng (李洺,이명) of the Kosǒng Yi clan, who was Minister of Justice at the time under King Chungjong (中宗,중종) (r. 1506 – 1544) (Fig. 6). 11

The residence can be architecturally categorized as a hanok (韓屋,한옥), which refers to a style of vernacular architecture built prior and during the Chosǒn Dynasty (Fig. 7). Hanok are structurally composed of a stone base with a heavy timber frame based on the Chinese design of parallel-weight distribution. Hanok typically have mud walls, papered wooden doors, and either thatched or ceramic tiled roofs. 12 While the timber-frame construction method was imported from China, hanok are defined by technological and aesthetic innovation that developed in Korea. Most rooms are equipped with a floor heating system known as ondol (온돌), which incorporates flues for the purpose of providing warmth in the winter and efficient ventilation for wood in the humid summer months. There are also rooms without ondol called taech’ong (大廳,대청), which are designed to facilitate air flow underneath the wooden floor so as to keep cool in the summer. This relationship to heat and airflow determines spatial organization.

With regards to its spatial arrangement, hanok are built based upon a modular system of units called bays. These units are combined to make up quarters, such as the anch’ae (안채), which are the inner/family quarters, the sarangch’ae (舍廊,사랑채) 13 known as the “male quarters” where

12 This initial definition of hanok and the subsequent discussion of its various architectural and structural elements is knowledge that the author compiled in collaboration with Peter Bartholomew and Sol Jung from the summer of 2008 to the summer of 2010, through on-site field surveys and interviews in South Korea.
13 Note that the term 사랑 (舍廊) actually refers to the management of activities. Since men were most commonly in charge of households, the projected term “male quarters” has remained popular in defining the space. However, one
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guests would be received, and the *haengnangch’ae* (행랑채) that served as the servants’ quarters. Upper class residences would usually have the ancestral shrine stand as a separate building on the residential grounds, but other quarters such as warehouses, granaries and libraries could also be built on site depending on the preference of the residents. In the case of the Imch’ŏnggak, the *anch’ae*, *sarangch’ae* and the *haengnangch’ae* constitute the domestic complex of the residence. At the Imch’ŏnggak, in addition to an ancestral shrine there is also a separate pavilion called the Kunjajŏng (君子亭, 군자정) that served as a bureaucratic office.

Aside from the architectural elements of this residence, it is important to understand its historic context. Founded after the fall of the Koryŏ Dynasty (918-1392), the Chosŏn Dynasty was marked by an ideological shift from Buddhism to Neo-Confucianism, as defined by Southern Song philosophers such as Zhu Xi (960-1279). Subsequently a meritocracy was established, and Korea adopted the civil examination system from China. This allowed local officials and landowners to gain more political and social influence and climb up to the level of the select aristocratic families that held power in the Koryŏ Dynasty. Under the new Neo-Confucian system, academic knowledge became a powerful tool. Men distinguished by their academic achievements and scholarly education grounded in Classical Chinese literature rose up the ranks of the bureaucracy. Thus, the Chosŏn Dynasty heralded the development of what became known as “literati” culture on the Korean Peninsula, and, to this day, famous Neo-Confucian scholars T’oegye Yi Hwang (退溪 李滉, 퇴계 이황) and Yulgok Yi I (栗谷 李珥, 율곡 이이) are recognized as distinguished individuals in Chosŏn Dynasty history. Both literati philosophers are printed on Korean banknotes along with King Sejong (世宗, 세종) (r. 1418-1450), who invented the Korean writing system known as *Hangul* (한글). Yi Myŏng, a high official in the Chosŏn Dynasty government would have been a

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literati himself, and, therefore, it is quite feasible that a Sinitic cultural
tendency influenced the architectural choices he made in building the
Imch'ǒnggak.

III. Architectural Parlance in the Domestic and Civic Realm

While most hanok seem to mimic the shape of certain letters in the hangúl writing system, this is not an intentional decision. This misconception stems from the fact that the modular bay system results in combinations of bays that form right angles and straight lines similar to letters such as ㄱ ㄴ ㅣ ㅁ. Hanok are built and arranged according to principles of geomancy known as p’ungsu (風水, 풍수)\(^{15}\) and other such factors making sure that the inner quarters cannot be seen by outsiders and respecting the privacy of neighboring residences.\(^{16}\) If the floor plan of a hanok happens to look similar to the characters above, this is a coincidence. It is also important to keep in mind that the earliest hanok were built from the late 1300’s, before King Sejong created the hangúl writing system in 1423/6.

Setting the hangúl architectural formation myth aside, the Imch’ǒnggak residence offers a very compelling evidence for the incorporation of Chinese characters into architecture. Upon a cursory look at the floor plan of the residence (Fig. 8), it is clear that none of the hanok on site is shaped in the hangúl characters listed earlier. As a matter of fact, the domestic complex to the West, which is comprised of the anch’ae, sarangch’ae and haengnangch’ae, is intentionally shaped in the form of the Chinese character 用 (용, yong) which indicates utility.\(^{17}\) The character can be recognized when read on a west to east vertical orientation.\(^{18}\)


\(^{16}\) Sangbong Ryu (Head of household, Yangjindang Ibamgotaek of Hahoe Village in Andong), in discussion with the author, August 22, 2010. (http://www.orientalarchitecture.com/koreasouth/hahoe/yangjindang.php)

\(^{17}\) Yi, Hang-Jeung, 5.

\(^{18}\) Jang Baec-Kie and Cho Sung-Ki in "A Study on the Meaning of Letter-Shaped House Plan and Housing Principles of the Imchonggak in Andong (Andong Imch'ŏnggak üi munja hyŏngt'ae e natanan úimi wa taekpŏp e kwanhan yŏngu)." *Kŏnch’uk yŏksa yŏngu*, Vol. 10 3:27 (2001), 25-43, question the theory that the Imch'ŏnggak's domestic quarters is a direct reference to the Chinese character, 用, since the current layout does not exactly appear like the character,
meaning might seem a suitable in itself for this domestic complex that implies the collaboration and cooperation between the dichotomy of ‘men and women,’ ‘master and servant,’ there is a second, underlying meaning. According to the updated clan records\textsuperscript{19}, the character 用 itself was conceived of as a visual overlay of the Chinese characters for sun and moon, namely 日 and 月 respectively (Fig. 9).\textsuperscript{20}

The formation of the domestic complex seems to have two layers of meaning – firstly that of the character 用 itself, that embodies due to two connective bays between the haengnangch’ae and the anch’ae that are missing. They do consider, however, the possibility that the layout is meant to look like a calligraphic variation of 用. However, it is important to consider that originally the Imch’ǒnggak domestic quarters had 50 bays, and that this was reduced to 48 bays in subsequent years during the process of repair and reconstruction. One can postulate that the original 50 bay design would have made the living quarters look like the complete written form of 用. (For further reference please consult: Soon-yong Jang, "Ancient Architecture in Korea: Andong, Imchongkak (Hankuk kokǒnch'uk: Andong Imch'ǒnggak chǒngjŏn mit Kunjajŏng)," \textit{Wǒlgan kǒnch'uk munhwa}, 41 (1984), 75.) Lastly, the configuration of Imch’ǒnggak from a spatial standpoint has been discussed as the result of a functional composition of modular forms arranged so as to accommodate a large upper class family. Perhaps the modification from 50 to 48 bays might be explained by economic and structural reasons, rather than philosophical or philological concerns (For further reference, please consult: Jee-Hyun Oh and Jin-Kyoon Kim, "A Study on the Spatial Composition of Andong Imch’onggak (Andong Imch’ǒnggak ūi konggan kusŏng ē kwanhan yŏngu)," \textit{Taehan kǒnch'uk haksas Haksul palp’yo nonmun munjip}, 2:2 (2000), 601-604.)

\textsuperscript{19} Hang-Jeung Yi, \textit{Imch’ǒnggak}. (Andong, 2010), 4.

\textsuperscript{20} The overlay of Chinese characters as presented in Figure 9, was first noted by Murayama Chijin (村山智順) in \textit{Chōsen no Fūsui}, (Keiijō: Chōsensōtokufu; Tokyō: Kokushokankōkai), 1972. Murayama discussed this layout as a direct representation of a Korean p’ungsu theory, although Jang Baec-Kie and Cho Sung-Ki have refuted this as being unfounded in any written documentation of Korean p’ungsu practices or ideology. As mentioned in Footnote 17, Jang and Cho also have issue with the appearance of the layout not having the exact appearance of 用. In this paper, I am adopting Murayama’s proposed layout configuration solely as a visual example, and not to support his views on Korean p’ungsu.
the ideology of productivity, and secondly, that of the combination of sun and moon that symbolizes the wholesome and symbiotic relationship between the two energies as represented by the men and women of the household. The sun and moon can be interpreted as Daoist concepts of the female 陰 (yin) and male 陽 (yang) energies respectively (Fig. 10). Figure 10 most succinctly summarizes this philosophy, where the yin is correlated with black, and the yang with the white. It can be seen that both energies are in constant flux and balanced out by the quality of its opposite (Fig. 10).

In the context of Zhu Xi’s Neo-Confucianism, Daoist and Buddhist theories were borrowed to provide a metaphysical grounding for the earlier Confucian teachings. By incorporating elements of competing philosophies, Zhu Xi was able to formulate new concepts of 氣 (qi), the vital force that constitutes all matter in the physical world, and 理 (li), the principle that regulates these forces in an orderly manner. This theoretical framework established by Zhu Xi is adopted into the creation of the domestic complex at Imch’ǒnggak. While the architectural complex implicitly connotes the co-existence of men and women through the structurally combined spaces of the female anch’ae quarter, and the male sarangch’ae quarter, and the gender-neutral haengnangch’ae, the visual

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21 In their article, Jang Baec-Kie and Cho Sung-Ki, do not consider how gendered space within the domestic quarters might influence and be expressed by the layout. Starting with Murayama’s theory, and including those of other Korean scholars as well as Jang and Cho’s, the general consensus seems to be that what is being conveyed through the architecture is Neo Confucian, patriarchal and thus exclusive to men. While it is true that the Chosòn Dynasty had a patriarchal society, one cannot discount the role of women in the socio-cultural context of the time, and it is unlikely that the yangban ignored this aspect (For further reading on women in the Chosòn Dynasty, please consult: Martina Deuchler, The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology, Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1992.) Therefore, taking into consideration the feminine and masculine spaces of the anch’ae and sarangch’ae that comprise the domestic quarters, the visual overlay as seen in Figure 9 can be seen as representative of Daoist ideology of yin and yang, rather than a dubious reference to a tenet of Korean p’ungsu.

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The synthesis of the two characters for sun and moon further emphasizes this notion and grounds these social concepts in nature. Chinese characters are used not only to embody the concept these relationships, but also act as their visual manifestation. Given the architectural practice of the time, where the builders were carpenters and not architectural designers in their own right, the layout of the domestic complex would have been directed by Yi Myŏng himself, perhaps with the input of other family members, friends, and acquaintances.

The bureaucratic pavilion, Kunjajŏng, built in the seventeenth century, is also shaped after a Chinese character. When presented on a north to south vertical axis, it reads like one of the hangŭl vowel symbols,ㅏ. However, when read from a west to east vertical axis, the Chinese character 丁 (정, chŏng) presents itself. This particular character symbolizes the fourth of the ten celestial stems, which correlates to the element of fire and the southern direction. The choice of this Chinese character seems to indicate how the men of the Kosong Yi Clan were a part of the larger system of Neo-Confucian literati, and of the cycle of the celestial and earthly universe itself. The fourth stem 丁, in particular, is also affiliated with the Yin female energy, which balances out the predominantly male Yang energies of fire and the South. Even in this exclusively male pavilion that was reserved for official meetings and leisurely literati gatherings, the same philosophy employed in the construction of the domestic complex is expressed using a different Chinese character.

IV. Literati Legitimization through Chinese Poetry

The examples of the domestic complex and the bureaucratic pavilion speak directly to the Beaux Arts notion of talking architecture as theorized by Ledoux and Boullée. However, the name of the residence itself is another example that illustrates the strong relationship between the Korean literati and Chinese script.

Imch’ŏnggak (臨淸閣, 임청각) was a name given by Korea’s first renowned Neo-Confucian philosopher, T’oegye Yi Hwang, and was derived from the following excerpt in Tang Dynasty poet, Tao Yuanming’s poem, “Returning Home.”

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23 In combination with a consonant this vowel indicates an “ah” sound.
24 Yi, Hang-Jeung, 5.
25 It is important to note that Yi Hwang was not a member the Goseong Yi Clan.
I climb along the eastern hill and give a long whistle on the top, compose a poem by a clear stream.  

It can be seen that “Im-ch’ŏng” 臨 (임, Im), meaning to face/overlook/arrive and 清 (청, ch’ŏng), meaning clear (stream), were taken from the poem and combined with “gak”閣 (각), pavilion, to name the Kosŏng Yi Clan residence. This choice could have been a way to link the name back to T’oegye Yi Hwang, since T’oegye means “Retreating Creek.” It could also allude to the fact that the residence originally overlooked a river to its south, before a railroad was built through the compound during the Japanese colonial period (1910-1945) (Fig. 11).

The particular nuances behind the selection of the two particular Chinese characters are compelling, but the decision to name the residence based upon a Chinese poem is a more fundamental issue that addresses the literati concerns of the time.

For a scholar such as Yi Hwang, Tao Yuanming’s poem would have been the most suitable literary source from which to derive inspiration for the name of this residence, because Chinese poetry from the Han to Tang dynasties was considered one of the highest literary forms after historic records.  

As the godfather of the residence, Yi Hwang himself wrote the calligraphy for the wooden name plaque that now hangs inside the bureaucratic pavilion (Fig. 12). The active participation of a famous Neo-Confucian scholar in naming the residence would have called for literati standards of cultural practice that based itself upon the Chinese script and literature. As literary historian Peter H. Lee notes “…the entrenched literati [used] the official [Neo-Confucian] ideology as ‘an instrument of class domination, legitimization, and social mystification.’”  

By actively incorporating literati practice into the

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26 The excerpt and the corresponding Korean and English translations were transcribed from an informational plaque that was outside the residential compound of the Imch’ŏnggak.
28 Ibid., 9.
creation and conceptualization of the residence, Yi Myǒng made sure that the Imch’ǒnggak would embody the bureaucratic, academic, cultural and social status of the Kosǒng Yi Family.

V. Summary and Conclusion

The Imch’ǒnggak residence is truly unique in its method of architectural expression. The use of Chinese characters as a visual inspiration for a floor plan is unconventional and not common according to Korean, Chinese or Japanese architectural standards. While this practice is notable in itself as an architectural innovation, the consequence of how these Chinese characters are used as structural inspiration and then physically “written” on earth in the form of architecture is an issue that deserves further discussion. The emphasis on the visual representation and manipulation of Chinese characters through the medium of architecture and physical space seems to take the Chinese script beyond the level of writing as notation of a spoken language, into the realm of writing as symbolic, or even ideographic.

It is physically impossible for a human, whether they were literate in Classical Chinese or not, to be able to “read” these characters, since they are visually represented at a scale that cannot be perceived by the naked eye when standing on the ground of the actual residence. Perhaps a trek to a nearby hill or mountain would have provided a view similar to the one illustrated in Figure 8. Nevertheless, knowledge seems to be the most significant aspect of this architectural practice. In this case, “knowledge” would be defined as education and awareness of Neo-Confucian philosophy and literati culture, and “inside” knowledge of the fact that there was an intentional choice behind the architectural manifestation of Chinese characters. This “knowledge” places the literati in a privileged position and legitimizes the power and elitism associated with and endorsed by Chinese Neo-Confucian philosophy.\(^\text{29}\) The shape of the domestic complex and the bureaucratic pavilion frames the movement of the residents within the architectural space, actively reinforcing the underlying principles embodied by these Chinese characters. The name of the residence serves as a more apparent and accessible reminder of high rank to those who enter the main gates of the compound. As a whole, the Chinese characters employed in the Imch’ǒnggak communicate their ascribed semantic meanings, but also serve as status markers that communicate ideas of the physically tangible architectural realm the

Kosŏng Yi Clan inhabited, thus, “speaking” to the family’s overarching bureaucratic prominence in the Neo-Confucian social hierarchy.

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A History of Tea in China,  
Sometimes Touching on Korea  

Steven D. Owyoung  

Introduction  
Tea was a cultural tradition begun in ancient China. Entwined in a vast history, tea was bound to events and people that subtly changed tea from drink and medicine to art and aesthetic. As tradition, tea was the custom of serving the drink as courtesy and the drinking of the brewed leaf as herbal and beverage. As culture, tea was the focus of connoisseurship and practiced as a form of art. It was the use of the brew to inspire wisdom and attain spiritual transcendence.  

The story of tea starts in nature and in the garden. The tea plant is a member of the Theaceae family and belongs to the genus Camellia. Named Camellia sinensis, Chinese tea flowers in fall with blossoms of pure white, the pale petals surrounding a dense bouquet of stamens, yellow gold. Tea flowers produce fruit, a round, green husk that in winter turns dry and brown and trilobite bearing three seeds. Its spring leaves are oblong and pointed, serrated and glossy green.  

In its native habitat, tea is an evergreen bush or small tree that grows shaded in forests or exposed on hills and cliffs of stony soil. After the cold of late winter, spare shoots and short sprouts quickly give way to a luxurious flush that carpets the fields and terraced slopes in jade and celadon. Within days, the new leaves are picked, processed, and dried to provide an astounding variety of teas in all shapes, sizes, and hues, each offering a brew distinct in color, aroma, and taste.  

In China, tea now grows in a large range from the southern island of tropical Hainan north to the temperate coast of Shandong: from the slopes of the mountains of Gansu in the northwest to the southeast and the Wuyi cliffs in Fujian and further across the straits to Taiwan. But in prehistoric times, tea grew in the southwest, a distant realm of great natural riches, a far away cornucopia and the only source of tea. There, the vast, primordial wilderness of Sichuan and Yünnan nurtured ancient
trees that grew for a thousand years. The great tea tree was high and broad, its a taproot bored deep into the earth, displacing soil with its girth, the trunk towering into the sky, its branches bearing a perpetual bounty of leaves, dark and shining.

The Tang poet Lu Yü 陸羽 (circa 733-804 C.E.) once wrote in the *Book of Tea*: “Tea is from a splendid tree of the south.” Stately and superior, the tree marked the seasons with abundance. In fall, tea flowered profusely and scented the air, it bore fruit and seeds aplenty, and in the clear cold days of late winter, within the still and somnambulant forest, tea grew and glowed. The majestic tree was radiant: a magnetic, irresistible sight, the early harbinger of spring and the force of life renewed. Insects stirred and fed on its buds, birds courted among its branches, and simians and humans alike sampled its tender leaves. The spirits, deities, and demi gods too were drawn by beautiful tea.

**Pre dynastic Xia and Xia Dynasty**

Tea lore and legend began in the late Neolithic with the myth of Shen Nong the Divine Cultivator. God-like and sage, Shen Nong 神農 (tradition circa 2838-2698 B.C.E.) was expert in husbandry and spread his knowledge of botany, horticulture, and medicine. One day, according to the stories, he discovered tea while under the shade of a fine tree listening to the breeze whispering through its branches. A sprite flew in on a zephyr rustling the leaves and sending a green shower down into the bubbling water cauldron beside him. Enticed by the aroma wafting up with the steam, he tasted the light golden brew and found it pleasantly bitter with a lingering sweetness. Sipping more, he felt refreshed yet relaxed, alert yet calm, clear minded and purposeful.

To name tea, Sheng Nong sought the scribe of the Yellow Emperor 黃帝 (tradition circa 2696–2598 B.C.E.), Cang Jie the Nomenclator, who possessed four eyes to see all the patterns of Heaven and Earth and so named all that he saw. Cang Jie倉頡 (tradition circa 2650 B.C.E.) examined the plant, comprehending its integral parts – herb, man, soil, and tree – and pronounced tea as *tu*茶. Shen Nong spread its name throughout the land. The people, however, called tea according to their native tongues and dialects – *jia*檟, *she* 蕨, *ming* 茗, *chuan* 荼, and *cha* 茶 – but tea was long known and written as *tu* 茶.

Shen Nong continued to drink tea and found its leaves nutritious as food and that its bitter flavor enhanced the taste of other fare. He investigated its medicinal properties and noted its stimulating, purgative,
analgesic, and antiseptic effects. He used tea as an herbal remedy for toxins, respiratory and digestive problems as well as physical and mental fatigue. In tradition, his knowledge of tea and medicine were preserved in the *Materia Medica* 神農本草. It was written that Shen Nong said, “Tea, when taken over a long period of time, gives a person strength and contentment.”

Shen Nong, the icon and the legend, remained fundamental to the tradition of tea. He personified tea as the singular gift of Heaven, brought by a spirit to a demi-god then given into the hands of humankind. To Shen Nong, tea was a pleasure, sustenance, and a medicine: tea was essential to good health and long life. His myth, practices, and beliefs persisted for millennia and deeply colored the history of tea.

**Shang dynasty**

After the decline of the Xia, the Shang rebelled and established a dynasty that lasted over half a millennium. The Shang built their capital on the Central Plain. Shang royalty knew of southern products like rice, but they were rare and costly. There was no historical evidence that the Shang knew of tea, and so tea remained a southern phenomenon, unique to Sichuan and Yunnan, isolated and distant.

The Shang king ruled a theocratic state in which he was high priest. He worshipped the supreme deity Lord on High and fulfilled his filial duties with sacrifices to his ancestors at shrines and temples. By means of divination, rites, and sacral offerings, he communed with the spirits, entreating them for success in the hunt and war, and the continued welfare of the state.

Served in fine bronze vessels, meat, grain, and wine were the sacred foods offered to the deity and spirits. The Shang was especially skilled in the casting of drinking vessels and the brewing of wine. It was said that their love of wine corrupted them, and they grew despotic and cruel. The people suffered and the Zhou rebelled.

**Pre dynastic Zhou**

The Zhou were a people west of the Shang. As Shang vassals, the Zhou defended the western borders of the kingdom. Unlike the hunters and warriors of the Shang, the Zhou were agriculturalists with an advanced but highly conservative society. Moral, temperate, and visionary, the Zhou shared their botanical and horticultural knowledge with the people under their influence, creating settlements, trade, markets, and revenue.
Oppressed by the debauched Shang, the Zhou allied themselves with the BaShu, a southern people of Sichuan. Like the Zhou, the BaShu were contemporary to the late Shang and possessed a vibrant and highly developed bronze culture. They were reputed to be fierce fighters and skilled in the art of war.

The once vital Shang was a shadow of its former self. Caught between the armies of the Zhou and BaShu, the Shang were defeated in a single great battle and destroyed. In celebration of their victory, the Zhou sent palace concubines to Sichuan, binding the BaShu nobility to the Zhou aristocracy through marriage. In return, the BaShu sent the vast riches of Sichuan in tribute. According to the later record, Realms South of Mount Hua 華陽國志, tea was sent to the Zhou from the backwaters of Ba and from Shu, “good tea” from the mountains of Shifang and “rare tea” from Nan’an and Wuyang.

Sichuan tribute bridged the divide between two immensely disparate cultures of the Zhou and BaShu. Tribute was the prelude to taxes and trade, and trade included tea. As a medicinal unique to the south, tea was added to the Zhou pharmacology, but the impact of tea on northern habits and customs remained tentative, open to question and speculation. Not so the mysteries and natural wealth of Sichuan, which drew the attention of power and ambition. Such intense interest foreshadowed the incorporation of Sichuan into the political and economic spheres of the Central Plains.

**Zhou Dynasty**

After the conquest, the Zhou established a dynasty lasting many centuries. They built their capital on the Central Plain and advanced their power by exploiting their great knowledge of farming. Elevating their sedentary and conservative culture among the people, they spread eastward.

The Zhou was a theocracy based on the worship of Heaven and sacrifices to the ancestors. The king was known as the Son of Heaven and was high priest performing rites and sacrifices for the benefit of the state. Tutelary deities included the fabled Queen Mother of the West 西王母 who, according to myth, received the Zhou king Mu 周穆王 (976-922 or 956-918 B.C.E.) and gave him the secret of immortality, which he squandered.

Early Zhou rulers were considered virtuous and moral, but they decreed austere and often harsh laws. The Zhou restricted the use of wine to rites and ceremony and banned drunkenness on pain of death.
Correct and abstemious, the Zhou may well have drunk tea from Sichuan instead of wine, yet there is no contemporary evidence for such a practice. Still, attributions of tea in the Zhou persisted and it was written that the strict Duke of Zhou 周公 (11th century B.C.E.), using the ancient names of tea, said, “Jia 檟 is kutu 苦茶, bitter tea.” Thereafter, the phrase “tea instead of wine” was intimately linked to the notion of temperance and moderation.

As horticulturalists, the Zhou love of plants was clear from the Book of Songs 詩經, but there was no record of tea as herb or tree. When the term was mentioned in poetry, tu 茶 meant sowthistle, a lovely bitter herb used as flavoring and food. Like sowthistle, tea was also bitter and pleasing, the two intertwining, till tea became nouvelle cuisine and part of the culinary arts of the time.

**Warring States**
The Zhou slowly fragmented into contending states, each having to institute and administer policy. Questions of governance generated differing theories of rule, including the philosophical principle of wuwei 無為 or non intention attributed to Laozi 老子 (6th or 5th-4th centuries B.C.E.), regarded as the founder of Daoism.

The many states vied for dominance in a period marked by incessant warfare and turmoil, particularly in the north. Despite the political and military tension, trade continued, and tea reached the eastern state of Qi where the high minister Yen Ying 晏嬰 (578-500 B.C.E.) personified moderation, frugality, and simplicity by wearing plain cloth and eating “only coarse grain, three roasted fowl, five eggs, and tea.” In the sixth century B.C.E., tea was likely a dried leaf, steeped, infused, or boiled as a beverage or soup. As a vegetable, dry leaf tea was reconstituted by soaking in water and then steamed or stewed.

In the south, the state of Chu flourished. By way of evidence, the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙 (died ca. 433 B.C.E.) was laden with treasure: an exceptional set of bronze bells and chimes, wares of precious metals, and fine vermillion lacquers. Strange, antlered guardians and armed, feathered spirits protected the grave from the chaos of the mundane and nether worlds. Within nested caskets, at the foot of the body, was a small packet of herbs and tea seeds. The herbs were all medicinal – treatments for respiratory and stomach ailments – the tea to relieve persistent coughing and labored breathing. Such an offering attested to the use of tea not only as a remedy but also as a gesture to the
soul of the dead as it departed on its eternal journey into the heavens.

Such cosmic travel was celebrated in the *Songs of Chu* which described a shaman casting off his material body to fly in astral form into the Vastness to meet with spirits:

...I departed, and swiftly prepared to start off on my journey.
I met the Feathered Men on the Hill of Cinnabar;
I tarried in the ancient land of Immortality.

Cinnabar was the potent ingredient in Daoist alchemical elixirs of immortality. Its mutability from solid mineral to liquid quick silver profoundly impressed the ancients and symbolized the transformation of states of being. The precious mineral came from the mines of Sichuan and its deep vermillion color was intimately associated with the distinctive shamanistic cultures of the south: Shu, Pa, and Chu. It was believed that by feeding on the large, dark ruby crystals of the mineral, mere mortals became feathered transcendents, gathering on high mounds of cinnabar, winging between the material and immaterial worlds, and living forever.

Though sparse and incomplete, the literary and archaeological evidence suggest that tea was a market commodity traded as far away from Sichuan as Shandong. It was a comestible taken as food and drink, and its use was considered a virtue, representing temperance, thrift, and plainness as opposed to excess and gluttony. As beverage, tea was possibly a libation in ceremony, if not ritual, and its different forms were provided to the dead as tokens of their former lives and relations. As funerary offerings, tea became associated with the eternal spirits.

**Pre dynastic Qin**
A major power among the warring states was the realm of Qin. Ruled by a long succession of able dukes, the Qin often led the hegemony of states in diplomacy, politics, and war. Having supplanted the Zhou in the west, the Qin profited from the trade with Sichuan and grew rich and ambitious. While perpetuating long standing forms and traditions, the Qin were also innovative, acquiring and creating new methods and technologies. In 325 B.C., the ducal heir declared himself King of Qin and within nine years invaded Sichuan to tap its riches. For over a century, his treasury overflowed with the bounty of the south, including tea.

The wealth of the Qin allowed its rulers to support occult practices such as funding the immense costs of alchemy and the creation
of the golden elixir. Their desire for everlasting life expressed itself in the love story of the princess Nongyü 弄玉 and the courtier Xiao Shi 薰史. Nongyü was the daughter of Duke Mu of Qin 秦穆公 (659-621 B.C.E.) for whom Xiao Shi served as palace alchemist. Xiao Shi enchanted Nongyü with gifts of cosmetics and by teaching her to play the flute. Charmed by the music, they soared immortal into the heavens. In tandem, they roamed the universe: he, mounted on a dragon, and she, on a phoenix. Inspired by Nongyü, generations of Qin dukes and kings yearned for immortality, ever searching for the elixir of life, the herb of no death.

Qin Dynasty
The vast wealth of Sichuan funded Qin statecraft, intrigue, and the naked aggression needed to conquer the rival states of the Central Plains and the southern kingdom of Chu. The Qin deployed its generals, commanders, and great armies in a campaign lasting seventy years. With the destruction of the state of Qi in 221 B.C., the Qin king (Ying Zheng 嬴政, 259-210 B.C.E.) ascended the throne as First August Thearch 始皇帝 to rule god-like over both the mundane and spirit realms of the new imperium.

The First Emperor built his capital in the ancient state of Qin and secured the northern borders with a wall so great that it eventually traversed the continent. He fielded battalions of quadriga, two wheeled chariots drawn by horses four abreast. He built vast and opulent palaces at Xianyang and Ebang filled with the art of imperial workshops commissioned to furnish the vast court complex with beautiful art and music.

To assure that history began with his reign, the First Emperor burned books and buried scholars. Only works and experts on astronomy, astrology, divination, and medicine were spared, and his court was filled with herbalists, physicians, seers, stargazers, and masters of esoterica who catered to his obsession for spiritual power and immortality.

Like his Qin ancestors, the First Emperor passionately desired everlasting life, and his emissaries combed the empire for plants and elixirs that imparted the transcendent state of no death. Once he heard of an enchanted island where there grew a miraculous plant. A story from the Master of the Gold Pavilion 金樓子 described his search:

On top of the mystic isle of Shenzhou there is the herb of no death,
the new sprouts of which grow in profusion. The dead are restored with this herb. In the time of the First Emperor, many in [a certain place] were driven to death, but birds resembling crows dropped this herb to the ground and revived the dead, who immediately sat up. The emperor sent someone to enquire [and learned] that on the magical island of Tanzhou in the Eastern Sea, the herb of immortality grew in beautiful fields.

Such descriptions of paradise and the herb of everlasting life resonated deeply with the esoteric masters, and by virtue of its beauty, quality, efficacy, and bitterness, tea was likened to the herb of no death. To purify themselves before the divinities and spirits, the alchemist fasted, drinking tea to purge waste and toxins from their bodies. They drank tea to fortify themselves against the ordeal of the laboratory, a grueling process that exposed them to merciless schedules, noxious chemicals, fire and heat, all while demanding knowledge, nerve, and precision. Through their strict regimen of tea, tea itself became intimately associated with the golden elixir and immortality.

To order the country and align its cosmic points, the First Emperor made numerous state tours. Riding by coach over hundreds of miles, he performed rites at the sacred rivers and mountains of the empire. In his sacrifices on Mount Tai, he sought to confirm the Mandate of Heaven and prayed for revelation in his pursuit of eternal life. He wished to be spirited away to the stars and ascend the ranks of the immortals. Hoping to find the herb of no death, he shipped embassies of young men and maidens into the sea in search of the idyllic isles. On his last tour of Mount Tai, the First Emperor suddenly died. His body was returned to the capital and buried in a massive tomb, the center of an immense necropolis guarded by full scaled armies and graced with the amenities of a lavish and elegant life. According to the histories, the interior of the tomb was an intricate analogue of the universe, a mirror of the emperor’s eternal reign over the empire in harmony with the cosmos.

The Qin longing for eternal life reflected a widespread concern for health, longevity, and immortality that pervaded society at large during a time of uncertainty and war. The aristocracy and wealthy were especially receptive to the notion of prolonged life and perpetual being, prompting their support of pharmacology, medicine, and alchemy. Among herbs, none so perfectly fit the description of the beautiful herb of no death, and none was nearly as benign or as efficacious as tea. Once remote and alien, Sichuan was now integral to the empire, and the
cultivation of tea spread rapidly down the Yangzi eastward.

**Han Dynasty**
The First Emperor’s unexpected death triggered internal struggles that quickly destroyed the dynasty. Out of the ruin of the Qin rose the Han.

The Han rulers unified the country and adopted the imperial manner and styled themselves *huangdi* 皇帝, emperor. They built their capitals at Xi’an and Luoyang in the north and continued to draw on the abundant resources of the south. Their palaces were filled with sumptuous works: inlaid, decorative bronzes, fine nephritic jades set in gilt, all lighted with scented oils aflame in golden lamps. Han Wudi 漢武帝 (156-87 B.C.E.), the Martial Emperor, employed a host of Daoist masters and surpassed the Qin in his quest for immortality. He took to heart the words of the *Dao De Jing* 道德經, the *Book of the Way and Power*:

The Dao is constant, but nameless.
Although the Primal Simplicity is small,
All under Heaven submit to it.
If lords and princes would but embrace it,
The myriad creatures would do homage to them;
Heaven and Earth would harmonize to send sweet dew.

Sweet dew was a celestial manifestation of harmonious accord that not only affirmed the Mandate of Heaven but also imbued long life. It was said that the Martial Emperor built storied pavilions, climbing their steps to collect sweet dew from golden dishes and silvery mirrors, then drinking the mystical essence for health, longevity, and immortality.

The Han nobles delighted in the depiction of Daoist subjects. Incense burners of inlaid bronze were made as miniature sacred islands and vessels of white jade were carved with winged immortals. The members of the high aristocracy were buried in full suits of nephrite in the belief that the precious stone would preserve their mortal flesh. But jade was not the only alchemical medium. There were masters of esoterica who recommended tea. The earth-bound immortal known as Master Gourd 壺居士 (traditional circa 1st -3rd centuries C.E.) offered prescriptions and predictions: “Bitter tea, drunk habitually over a long time, bestows immortality.” Renowned for the infallibility of his advice, Master Gourd’s teachings were followed by Lady Dai.
Lady Dai 軑夫人 (died ca. 168-164 B.C.E.) was a noblewoman who died over two millennia ago. She was buried in Changsha where her husband was prime minister to the Prince of Chu. Her funeral pall bore her portrait and showed not only her relationship to the Sun and the Moon of the Cosmos but also the sacrificial foods prepared for her grave. Beneath the painted pall, deep within her tomb, Lady Dai lay within nested caskets of wood, lacquer, silk, and feathers, her body perfectly preserved for over two thousand years. She was buried with all she required for her journey, including the *Dao De Jing* written on silk, lacquer ware, especially a set of fine nested cups, and a woven bamboo basket labeled “jiasi 檟司, tea case” filled with fragrant tea.

In the Han, as in the Zhou, the finest tea still came from Sichuan. In 59 B.C., the poet and imperial censor Wang Bao 王褒 (active ca. 73-49 B.C.E.) wrote out the duties of his servant, including that “at Wu-yang he shall buy tea...” and that “when there are guests in the house, he shall...boil tea and fill the bowls.” However, in Lady Dai’s life time, tea grew at Tuling near Changsha, and though the tea buried with her may have come from Sichuan, she might well have acquired a taste for the local leaf from Tuling 茶陵, known as Tea Hill. In the Han, the name Tea Hill eventually changed from Tuling to Chaling 茶陵, the word *tu* 茶 for tea transformed by the deletion of a single stroke to *cha* 茶.

**Three Kingdoms period**

After the fall of the Han dynasty in the third century C.E., the empire was divided among three major powers: Wei in the north, the state of Wu in the southeast, and in the southwest, Shu Han. Despite the warfare between the three kingdoms, scholarship was kept alive by academics whose glosses and commentaries to ancient texts revealed the early practice of tea.

Around 230 C.E., Zhang Yi 張揖 (active ca. 237-232 C.E.) wrote a supplemental glossary known as the *Expanded Understanding Rectitude* 廣雅 which stated:

In Jing and Ba, tea leaves are picked to make cakes. Of those made from aged leaves, the cakes are produced by using rice paste to make them. To make *ming* 茗 tea to drink, a tea cake is first toasted until it is reddish in color. The cake is then pounded to powder and placed in a pottery vessel, using boiling water to pour over and cover
it. Brewed with scallions, ginger, orange, and herbs, the drink sobers the inebriated and causes wakefulness.

Zhang Yi noted the use of tea as a stimulant that physicians prescribed to overcome sleepiness: “drink it and awake.” Others, however, feared that tea induced insomnia and was something to avoid, warning “Drinking true tea causes sleeplessness.” Zhang Yi also recognized the analeptic effect of tea on intoxication: “the drink sobers the inebriated.” The sympathetic simply wrote, “This is called tea that dispels wine,” while others dryly observed, “any drunk can use it.”

In the Expanded Record 广志, Guo Yigong 郭義恭 (3rd century C.E.) described three kinds of brewed tea:

Tea grows thick and dense. Properly brewed, it is called mingcha 茗茶. Combined and cooked with the paste or juice of jasmine and dogwood berries, it is called cha 茶, tea. There are red colored tea leaves mixed with rice paste and cooked. This is called wujiu cha 無酒茶, tea that dispels wine.

Jin dynasty
The fall of the Han began many centuries of protracted warfare among major and minor states, including the Jin dynasty. The Jin emperors wrested power from the Wei and established their first capital in the north at Luoyang. There the poet Du Yü 杜毓 (ca. 282-311 C.E.) wrote the Ode to Tea 荈賦, in which he described tea as the sacred herb:

On Spirit Mountain is a high peak where a wondrous thing gathers.
It is tea,
filling the valleys and covering the hills,
moist with the wealth of the Earth,
blessed with the sweet spirit of Heaven.

Further in the poem, the poet then set out essential criteria for tea, alluding to fine water, beautiful celadons, and ancient rites:

Take water from the flowing river Min,
draw from its pure currents.
Select bowls from lustrous wares.
produced in Eastern Ou.
Serve tea with a gourd ladle,
emulating the way of Duke Liu.

The Ode then described for the first time the look of brewed tea, a

Perfect thick froth, afloat with the splendor of the brew,
glistening like piling snow,
resplendent like the spring florescence.

To the poet, the beauty of tea transcended the mundane and brought the
mind into accord with Heaven:

Chaste and true like new frost,
pure like the Void,
tea harmonizes the spirit, blending within,
languidly free, effortlessly Empty.

Tea was further elevated by Zhang Zai 張載 (3rd century C.E.)
who in 280 C.E. traveled to Chengdu, the provincial capital of Sichuan
where he became enraptured with the joys of the leaf. He wrote
Ascending the White Rabbit Pavilion 登成都白兔樓詩 in which he
described tea in religious terms as first among the vaunted sacrificial
wines, sauces, and waters offered to the deities and ancestors:

Fragrant, beautiful tea is the crown of the Six Purities;
Overflowing with flavor to the Nine Regions.

Here Zhang Zai mentioned for the first time in literature the scent of tea
and its abundant taste, noting that the use of tea had spread from Sichuan
throughout the empire.

Internal strife and foreign incursions forced the Jin to flee from
Luoyang to Nanjing where remnants of the imperial house established a
capital in exile. Southern life and culture offered an environment
conducive to reflection, and the three philosophies of Buddha, Laozi, and
Confucius flourished. Daoist and nativist thought dominated at the court
at Kuaiji where Prince Yü 司馬昱 (320-372 C.E.) was renowned for his
literary salon. Among his courtiers was Wang Meng 王濛 (309-347
C.E.), a man “obsessed with tea.” As a northerner and tea drinker, Wang
Meng was something of a rare bird. Unlike many northern émigrés living in the south, he was inured to the effects of tea: its mental sensations, the nervousness, tremors, and insomnia, the irregularity and frequent calls of nature. According to the story Wang Meng promoted tea aggressively:

> Whenever people arrived, he promptly ordered them to drink it. All the scholars and bureaucrats detested it and suffered. After each time they went to see him, they would always say, ‘Today, we drowned.’

Thereafter, the phrase “drowning” or “to drown” became derisive slang for tea. Wang Meng and his critics marked the first but not the last time tea would be subject to abuse. But tea had other advocates, especially at the court of Prince Yü.

His prime minister was the Daoist scholar and tea master Liu Tan 劉惔 (active ca. 345-347 C.E.). Inspired by his spiritual attainments and style, Prince Yu simply said, “Liu Tan and his way of tea possess Truth.”

Masters like Liu Tan were alleged to receive visits from spirits requesting their tea. According to the *Record of the Supernatural and Strange* 神異記, the tea master Yü Hong 虞洪 went into the mountains to search for wild tea. He met a Daoist leading three oxen, mystic familiars and alchemical symbols of power, endurance, and patience. The Daoist then said:

> “I am Master Cinnabar Hill. I have heard that you are superb at the art of tea, and I have long thought to call on you. Within the mountains is a place where supreme tea grows, tea that I will present to you. In return, Master, I pray you make daily sacrifices to me and beg you share with me the bounty of your tea bowl and sacrificial ladle.”

Upon establishing libations of tea to the Daoist, Yü Hong and his family then entered the mountains each spring to gather supreme tea.

During the Jin dynasty, the poets elevated tea by description and hyperbole. Tea was an aesthetic pursuit for which water quality, green ceramic wares, and the gourd ladle were considered requisites for the making of fine tea. Brewed tea was a frothy liquid likely made with powdered leaf whisked to a thick foam. Tea was likened to the highest
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sacrament and it was a custom throughout the empire. Practitioners of tea were most often Daoists whose mastery of preparation and service was so sublime that the art of tea was considered an expression of harmony with the Universe.

Like the followers of religious Daoism, Buddhists integrated tea into their monastic routine as a beverage and libation, a substitution for wine, and as an aid to meditation. As was recognized, tea caused sleeplessness and was so used extensively by Daoists and Buddhist alike to endure the rigors of prolonged meditation.

The monkish dependence on tea was enshrined in a late apocryphal tale in which the Indian monk Bodhidharma (5th century C.E.) once sat in deep concentration facing a rock wall for nine years in his quest for enlightenment; he suddenly realized that he had fallen asleep. In a fury, he tore at his face, ripping off his eyelids and throwing them to the ground where the leaf-like flesh sprouted miraculously into plants of tea. Instinctively, he plucked some leaves to taste. Upon chewing the succulent herb, he felt refreshed, focused, and ready to resume meditation.

Tang dynasty
After centuries of partition, the empire was reunited under the Tang. The Tang emperors created a golden age of high art and culture, establishing their capitals at Chang’an and Luoyang. In the eighth century, Daoism and Buddhism flourished, and monasteries became centers of learning that attracted students from all over Asia.

Around 755 A.D., the Korean prelate Kim Gyo-gak 金喬覺 (696-794 C.E.) settled in Anhui on Mount Jiuhua, one of the holiest Buddhist mountains in China, where he planted tea on its slopes. His spiritual attainments were such that he was believed to be an incarnation of the bodhisattva Ksitigarbha, the saintly instructor, savior of souls from Hell, and protector of children.

The Tang was the age of poetry, and the empire’s greatest poet was Li Bo 李白 (701-762 C.E.). As a lover of wine, Li Bo wrote only of its dizzy delights and muzzy pleasures, he sang no songs to tea. But in 752 C.E., he happened to meet his nephew Zhongfu 中孚, Zen Master of Jade Spring Temple, who gave him a present of the monastery’s new tea. The dried leaves resembled the delicate hands and fingers of the deities, so in honor of the occasion Li Bo named the tea Immortal’s Palm in his preface and poem dedicated to the Zen master. To begin, he chanted his verse, describing the plant:
Tea grows among the rocks
And along Jade Spring’s ceaseless flow.
Root and stem exude a rich fragrance;
One whiff nurtures flesh and bone.
Lush and voluminous, the green leaves;
Branch upon branch, row upon row.

Then Li Bo sipped the brew and noted the quality of the liquid leaf and its herbal effects:

This tea is pure in fragrance and mellow in taste, different from other teas. Thus, it restores youth and reverses decay, enhancing longevity.

Jade Spring Temple was only one of many Daoist and Buddhist monasteries that produced tea. Monks like the Zen master Zhongfu grew tea as a means to provide their clergy and laity with tea as beverage and libation, and as an aid to meditation. Tea was also an important part of ceremony to welcome the constant stream of patrons, guests, and visitors of the temples. Monasteries had kitchens, cooks, and masters at the ready to prepare and brew tea. Young servants and novices served bowls overflowing with the “splendor of the brew.”

In the history of tea, one exceptional temple novice was a boy named Lu Yü 陸羽 (circa 733-804 C.E.) who grew up to be a poet, tea master, and the author of the Chajing 茶經, the Book of Tea. Published in 780 C.E., the Chajing was the first treatise on tea ever written to explain the plant, its horticulture, harvest, and processing. Comprised of ten parts, the Chajing also offered an anthology of sources, quotes, and anecdotes on tea dating from the Neolithic to the early Tang dynasty as well as an extensive list of places that produced tea. The book described in detail the implements used in the preparation and brewing of tea as well as its service.

In the Tang, brewed tea was a decoction: the essences of the leaf extracted in water by either steeping, mixing, or boiling. Tea was steeped in a covered jar. A ewer of boiled water mixed tea powder in a bowl by the force of the stream of water. In the art of tea, Lu Yü boiled tea made from a tea cake that was first toasted, milled, and sifted to a very fine powder. Using a brazier to heat a cauldron, the powdered tea was then thrown into rapidly boiling water, the brew tempered with a measure
of warm water and allowed to simmer and spume. Floating on the steaming tea, a fine, light foam looked as “lustrous as drifting snow.” Ladled into bowls, the tea was served with ample helpings of froth, the “floreate essence” of tea”

Lu Yü preferred the use of green glazed ceramic bowls and went against the prevailing popularity of white wares in the service of tea. He famously compared the celadons of the Yüe kilns to the white of the Xing:

There are those who judge Xingzhou 聘州 ware superior to Yüezhou 越州. This is certainly not so. If Xing is like silver, then Yüe is like jade. This is the first way in which Xing cannot compare to Yüe. If Xing is like snow, then Yüe is like ice. This is the second way in which Xing cannot compare to Yüe. Xing ware is white, and thus the color of liquid tea in the bowl looks reddish. Yüe ware is celadon, and thus the color of tea appears greenish. This is the third way in which Xing cannot compare to Yüe.

Lu Yü’s preferences in color revived the fashion for green wares and influenced the imperial kilns to produce remarkable celadons for centuries thereafter.

Lu Yü and the Chajing made tea accessible than ever before, and such was the trend for tea that it was said that every household had a basket of tea implements. He advised the Huzhou intendant to send the tea named Guzhu to the palace thereby influencing imperial taste. Once an obscure foundling raised in a monastery, Lu Yü became famous and praised, even the dragon throne gave him grants and titles. The Tang tea merchants were so pleased that they commissioned small statues of him and gave them out to favorite customers. Depicted wearing the tricorn miter of a Daoist and reading the Chajing, Lu Yü became an object of reverence and was popularly canonized the Saint of Tea.

Tea continued to embody the Daoist desire for immortality. The hermit poet Lu Tong 盧仝 (trad. 790-835 C.E.) famously described his transformation from mortal to spirit in the Song to Tea:

The first bowl moistens my lips and throat.
The second bowl banishes by loneliness and melancholy.
The third bowl penetrates my withered entrails, finding nothing except a literary core of five thousand scrolls.
The fourth bowl raises a slight perspiration.  
The fifth bowl purifies my flesh and bones.  
The sixth bowl makes me one with the immortal, feathered spirits.  
The seventh bowl I need not drink, feeling only a pure wind rushing beneath my wings…

In the ninth century, Korean embassies visited the imperial court bringing tribute, diplomats, and students. In exchange, the palace presented the Silla missions with luxuries, ceramics, books, and medicines. Among the rarest and most desired gifts was tea. In 828, the Silla embassy returned from China with tea seeds as imperial tribute to the Korean throne. By royal decree, the precious seeds were planted near Buddhist monasteries on Mount Jiri, a place in the temperate climes of the Korean south.

Among those returning home to Korea was Choe Chiwon, 崔致遠 최치원 (857-? C.E.) who was sent as a child of eleven to study in Chang’an where he later passed the highest examinations and was known for his fine calligraphy and literary composition. He was of such talent that he became a close friend of the emperor Xizong 僖宗 (reign 873-888 C.E.). But after a decade in imperial service, he yearned for home and was granted permission to return to Korea. In 885 at age twenty-seven, Choe Chiwon departed for Korea, taking with him a special blend of green and fermented teas and commemorating the journey with a poem:

Wondering, ‘who from within the seas cares for one from without?’
I then ask where to find the river crossing.  
I only sought service, not profit;  
To honor my family, not myself.  
On the journey, a sorrowful parting: rain on the river.  
Returning home: a day in dream, touched by spring.  
Crossing the water, I happily meet with broad, favorable waves;  
Each washes from my tassels all ten dusty years.

Emperor Xizong no doubt hosted lavish banquets and intimate teas, the many farewell parties for his friend Choe Chiwon. A glimpse of late Tang imperial style was preserved at Famensi, a Buddhist temple patronized by Xizong and the imperial family for over two hundred years.

Known as the Temple of the Dharma Gate, Famensi was celebrated for a relic of the historical Buddha, a finger bone housed
beneath the Pagoda of the True Body of Buddha. Having stood for centuries, a heavy rain in April 1981 weakened the pagoda, causing half to fall way. Six years later, archaeologists excavated beneath the foundations to open subterranean chambers where they found a remarkable cache of coins, sculpture, reliquaries, and tea implements. Hidden under the floor of the last and lowest chamber was a nested reliquary containing the sacred relic: the ivory white finger bone of the Buddha. Other objects of silver and gold were found, many of which were related directly to the preparation and service of tea:

- Canisters
- Baskets
- Pestle wheel and mortar
- Fine mesh sifting box and tray
- Turtle shaped tea box and measuring spoon
- Brazier
- Cauldron
- Saltcellar
- Glass tea bowl and stand
- *Mise* celadon bowl

*Mise* 密色 meant “secret color,” a special ceramic ware sent in tribute from the Yüezhou kilns to the imperial palace. In Tang poetry, connoisseurs praised Yüezhou ceramics, comparing their round shapes to the “full moon” and their light weight to “rising clouds” or “thin ice.” The beauty of Yüezhou glazes was described as “misty and vaporous” with the fine, sensuous qualities of ancient ritual jades. The blue green celadon of “secret color” ware was likened to a “bright moon stained with spring rain” and “green clouds” and “tender lotus leaves soaked in dew.”

Why it was call “secret” may have been because it was imperial and reserved for palace use and prohibited elsewhere. Another legend had the glaze formula kept “secret,” so it could not be reproduced by others. Sixteen pieces of *mise* celadon were found in the sealed chambers beneath the pagoda at Famensi. Until their discovery in 1987, no examples of *mise* ware were known or recognized, and indeed *mise* was thought to be a fabulous myth. Lu Yü and his insistence on tea bowls from Yüezhou may well be credited for the revival of green wares and one of the superb glazes of the celadon tradition.

The plebian crowd, however, prepared and served tea with an
array of common ceramics, even implements and wares of stone.

**Liao**

After the fall of the Tang dynasty, remnants of the imperial house took refuge in the south while the north was ruled by a succession of sinicized tribes: the Qidan, Tangut, and Jurchen. The highly cultured Qidan established the Liao dynasty (916-1125 A.D.) with southern borders and settlements that reached beyond the Great Wall into Hebei province. Famed for their exquisite taste in gold and silver, the Qidan patronized the northern kilns for fine ceramics, including innovative white wares and celadons.

In the Qidan tombs of the Zhang family at Xuanhua, a wall painting depicted servants carrying red lacquered cup stands and bowls of tea, using a wheel pestle and mortar to grind tea into powder, and heating a tall water ewer on a pedestaled brazier. Various implements and equipage stand ready on a table nearby: ewers, bowls, brushes, tongs, and so on. The absence of the cauldron and the prominence of the spouted ewer signaled the change in brewing tea in the late Tang. Tea was no longer boiled as soup but rather mixed like an instant powder with hot water using a spouted ewer.

Lacking the temperate territory for tea production, the Qidan depended on Song China and Goryeo Korea for caked tea known imperially as “tribute of new tea” and “for examining the new tea.” The Goryeo bordered the Liao who alternately courted and intimidated the peninsula as well as the Song in the south. In 925, Goryeo sent Liao thirteen pounds of tea as tribute. In the tenth century, caked tea was known as rounds, wafers, balls, and bricks. One of the most costly cakes was flavored and scented with a rare import known as “dragon brain.” Dragon brain 龍腦 was Borneo camphor, an aromatic, peppery additive to soups, drinks and caked tea. The Korean court created its own version of dragon brain called “brain of the primordial” ( nao-yüan ch’a 脳元茶; noe-won cha 뇣원차): a fragrant tea that was sent as tribute to the Qidan Liao in 1038.

**Song**

In the south, the Song defeated the failed remains of the Tang and built capitals at Kaifeng and later Hangzhou. During the tenth century, tea processing reached an apogee of refinement; the best known came from the imperial tea estates of North Park or Beiyüan in Fujian. As different teas were developed, they acquired descriptive epithets and associations
with the reigns of specific emperors. In 977, North Park sent emperor Taizu 宋太祖 (reign 960-976 C.E.) “dragon and phoenix” rounds impressed with the design of the creatures for which the caked tea was named: large dragon, small phoenix, small dragon, and so on.

Under the influence of the palace official Cai Xiang 蔡襄 (1012-1067 C.E.), caked tea became more refined. Cai Xiang was a native of Fujian, a celebrated calligrapher, and a connoisseur of tea. Between 1041-1048, emperor Renzong 仁宗 (reign 1022-1063 C.E.) assigned Cai Xiang to oversee the annual tribute tea from North Park to the capital at Kaifeng. As the official in charge, Cai Xiang developed finer and finer teas to send the palace each spring. In his Record of Tea 茶錄, Cai Xiang wrote about tea and tea utensils, noting a change in taste wherein “tea has its true fragrance” and that “among the people of Jian’an [Fujian] who practice tea, none add aromatics lest they take away from tea’s true fragrance.”

In a letter to a friend, Cai Xiang wrote that he enclosed as gifts a “large cake, an extremely precious thing, and a Yüe celadon bowl” with which to drink the tea. It was later written that like the emperor, Cai Xiang drank tribute teas made from the tenderest tea buds and that a single measure of this tea was worth 40,000 in silver.

In 1078, a fortune in tea was sent to Korea. Thirteen pounds of Chinese dragon rounds and phoenix cakes were sent as tribute to the court of King Munjong 文宗 (reign 1046-1083 C.E.). Befitting the enormous value of such a gift, the tea was presented in fine bamboo boxes decorated in gold and silver in red lacquer cases.

The emperor aesthete Huizong 宋徽宗 (reign 1100-1126 C.E.) was an exceptional figure in art and culture. Known for his exquisite taste, his palace kilns produced the ceramic known as Ru ware, a celadon of pale glazes that blushed subtle rose to warm cool blue green hues. Made for the exclusive use of the palace, Ru remains the epitome of imperial ceramic production.

Huizong was an avid and expert practitioner of tea. He favored unscented teas that produced a pale cake and a paler powder as “white as fine paper.” As a connoisseur, he examined and tasted teas, playing games that highlighted the fragrance, sweetness, and smoothness of the brew. As a tea master, he challenged aristocrats and courtiers to best him at the art of tea making. He was a painter and calligrapher, who produced remarkable scrolls like Literary Gathering, which depicts a garden banquet set with a fine table and featuring rare palace teas. The
scene of young servants busily wiping the board, measuring tea into bowls, and tending the brazier and water kettles used a standard set of about one dozen utensils, including:

- Wooden mallet and pounder to crush caked tea
- Stone mortar to grind the tea into powder
- Bamboo and gauze sifter to refine and gather the tea powder
- Bronze kettle to boil and pour water
- Bamboo whisk to blend tea and water to a thick froth
- Ceramic tea bowl to mix tea and water and to drink from

Huizong preferred dark colored bowls, especially the Jian wares from Fujian. Made of coarse stoneware covered in a thick black, blue-black glaze, Jian was just a common ware used by the people of Fujian for tea. But under first Cai Xiang and then Huizong, the utilitarian Jian bowl was elevated to the heights of palace taste and games of tea. The close examination of white froth was easy against the dark glaze of a fine Jian bowl and fostered competitions. One contest was judged on the way the tea froth clung to the sides, known as “biting the bowl,” and whether or not the foam betrayed unwanted traces of liquid, or “water scars.”

Cai Xiang praised Jian bowls of “purple black with hare’s fur markings,” a transmutation of thick, unctuous iron glaze that had many forms, including an effect known simply as “butterfly,” a blue black color with clusters of luminous spots that appeared to vibrate and flutter. Others were indescribable yet strangely appealing, some prompted names such as partridge feather. Northern kilns produced patterned bowls fired with leaves placed in them. Extraordinary designs achieved the look of blossoming plum branches silhouetted against a starry night sky. Bowls of such rarity and beauty are still filled with measures of powdered tea. In Korea and Japan, whisked green tea remains an art of great mastery and meditation.

Beyond the palace walls, Kaifeng was a bustling city alive with the hurly burly of an imperial capital. All manner of trade was conducted within the shops and on the thoroughfares where street vendors sold everything, including tea. Taking respite from their work, a group of tea sellers serve out tea to one another, demonstrating their personal styles and skills. Without using a whisk, tea powder and water were mixed with just the force of the liquid stream, a precise technique known as diancha 點茶, “pointing tea.”
In the twelfth century, cordial relations between the Song and Goryeo encouraged the exchange of tribute and envoys. In 1123, Xu Jing 徐兢 (1091-1153) was sent with imperial gifts to the royal court of King Injong 仁宗 인종 (reign. 1122-1146), where he noted the difference in tea practices. He recorded that Koreans held ceremonial tea three times daily with tea implements arranged on a red tea table covered with a red cloth. A bamboo stick was used to crush the leaves and a device with several rings attached to a handle was used to stir and whip up foam in the tea bowl. He noted black bowls decorated with gold flowers, small bowls of a deep green jade-color, lotus-shaped basins, silver stoves and braziers in imitation of Chinese style. Highly critical and impolitic, he observed that Koreans regarded tea as medicine, something that they drank not slowly but compulsively and quickly. He further described the tea as bitter and astringent and “undrinkable.” When offered tea at court, he did not drink, writing that he “never drinks cold tea.”

Had he deigned to look beyond his nose, Xu Jing would have marveled at the Goryeo response to the gifts of palace tea and ceramics that Xu himself had presented to the king. For centuries, Korean potters had studied continental wares. Now, Goryeo celadons rivaled imperial ceramics in every quality. The Goryeo minister Yi Gyu-bo 李奎報 (1168-1241 C.E.) solemnly declared, “Tea and the Way are one” and described one exquisite celadon as “stolen from ‘heavenly harmony.’” Chinese connoisseurs echoed Yi Gyu-bo’s profound sentiments: astonished by Korean celadons, they bestowed their highest accolades, calling them Goryeo mise “secret color” or Goryeo Ru “palace ware.”

**Ming**

The Ming dynasty was founded in the brief wake of Mongol rule. The rebel Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-1398 C.E.) had fought the Mongols and wrested the empire from alien rule. Reigning as emperor under the name Hongwu 洪武帝, he established his capital at Nanjing and designated a key principality encompassing Beijing, later the second capital. During the Ming, relations with Korea were fitful but constant.

In 1388, the Korean scholar and envoy Yi Saek 李穡 (1328-1396) presented to the Ming court gold and silver plate, fine cloth, and decorated mats. Educated in China, Yi Saek was known as one of the “Three Recluses” of the Goryeo, a philosopher who promoted the art of tea as a spiritual discipline and as a means to enlightenment. On his return home, Yi Saek carried caked tea as presents from the imperial court.
to the Goryeo king. Soon after, however, Yi Saek learned that emperor Hongwu had radically changed the art of tea by subverting the whole notion of caked tea.

In the late summer of 1391, Hongwu issued a decree directed at the tea industry. Like the Song emperors before him, Hongwu praised the imperial gardens at Fujian: “Of all the tribute tea under Heaven, only that of Qianning is supreme.” But to the civil official and five hundred households of Qianning, he ordered the abolition of caked tea. In its stead, Hongwu instructed that four exceptional leaf bud teas – named Plucking Spring, First of Spring, Next of Spring, and Russet Sprouts – be sent to the palace.

The imperial decree established the state monopoly on tea, a move in concert with Hongwu’s extensive land reforms to make the people more productive, relieve them of unnecessary corvée labor, and to disturb the entrenched bureaucracy and its deep seated patterns of corruption. The change in labor practices meant an end to the expensive and time consuming making of caked tea throughout the tea growing regions. The fabled dragon and phoenix rounds began fading into history.

In the following year, the Korean King Taejo (reign 1392-1398), founded a new dynasty. Wishing to establish relations with the Ming court, King Taejo requested Hongwu to name the new regime. In 1393, Hongwu granted the dynasty the name Joseon after the ancient and sent a gold seal investing King Taejo as sovereign. Tea was sent to Korea to celebrate the inauguration, though caked tea became rarer as imperial stores were depleted.

As a man of common birth, Hongwu favored whole leaf from Guzhu and drank steeped tea. But caked tea was still used by members of the imperial family and aristocrats who kept the old traditions. The emperor’s son, Prince Ning (1378-1448), exemplified the conservative elite, a connoisseur who persisted in practicing the art of tea with caked tea. Known as the Slender Immortal and Master Cinnabar Hill, Prince Ning was Daoist and an alchemist, a true master of tea in later times. He extolled the virtues of caked tea in his work of 1408 Startled Immortals, Gods, and Hermits, still listing all the Song dynasty implements. But thirty years later, his cache of caked tea all but exhausted, the prince succumbed to reality and in his work Treatise on Tea admitted that tea “need not be made into paste for cakes.”

**Ming Literati**
During the late fifteenth through the sixteenth centuries, the literary and artistic elite was concentrated in the south on the shores of Lake Tai located between Nanjing, Hangzhou, and modern Shanghai. Lake Tai was literally and figuratively the “great lake,” the heart of Ming tea culture. The region was celebrated for its rare teas, fine Yixing ceramics, and the sweet water springs at Wuxi and Suzhou.

According to Ming sources, there were more than fifty famous teas in production during the sixteenth century, including teas from Guzhu and Tiger Hill. Most were green teas, but white, yellow, red, and black teas were being produced by at least the sixteenth century. Yangxian tea was especially popular among the literati. Historically and geographically related to the great Guzhu tea of the Tang dynasty, Yangxian was produced in Changzhou near the famous pottery town of Yixing near Lake Tai. Yangxian tea was noted for its leaf being “pale yellow, not green” and unlike the pan-fired teas of the Ming, its leaves were first steamed and then dried over a low fire. Brewed, it was “clear like jade dew.” Once lauded as Tang and Song imperial tribute, Yangxian was enjoyed as a rare tea in the repertoires of Ming tea masters such as Wang Lai and Wu Lun.

Wu Lun 吳綸 (1440-1522 C.E.) was from Yixing, living in the surrounding “hills and streams” as a reclusive tea master known as Hermit of the Distant Heart. He was friends with the renowned painter Shen Zhou 沈周 (1427-1509 C.E.) and crossed Lake Tai to visit the artist in Suzhou. As a tea master, Wu Lun was overtly partisan in his appreciation of the products of his hometown Yixing. He was not only partial to Yangxian tea but also promoted the teapots made at the local kilns by Gong Chun 供春 (variously 龔春, active 1506-1521 C.E.), a young servant in Wu Lun’s own household who learned to make ceramics from an old monk at nearby Jinsha Temple. Gong Chun perfected the use of the local clays and their special properties, creating teapots supremely suited for steeping tea and thus giving name to the Yixing tradition of tea wares. His master Wu Lun, by serving Yangxian tea infused in a fine teapot made by Gong Chun, attained an extraordinary level of tea that was rarely surpassed by other tea masters in the Ming.

Gong Chun’s successor was the Yixing potter Shi Dabin 時大彬 (circa 16th-17th centuries C.E.) whose initial works were large. Urged by the literati to make smaller pots to capture and contain the essence of tea, Shi Dabin reduced the size of his works to hold about half a pint of liquid or less. He became a famous artisan among the intelligentsia who
quickly acquired his works from across the lake in Suzhou.

Suzhou was famous for Tiger Hill, a place of sweet water and fine tea where an old pagoda overlooked the canals below. Near the top of the hill were three springs noted for fine water: Sword Pond, Hanhan Spring, and Third Spring Under Heaven, also known as Lu Yu’s Well.

Beneath the high tower, the slopes of the hill were devoted to tea gardens that produced Huqiu, a superior tea named after the place. Huqiu tea noted for its scent of “wintry beans” and a taste like “the scent of bean flowers, the flavor tended to being “pure and light.” When properly brewed, the tea was “like the color of moon light” or “white like jade.”

For the literati, tea was an aesthetic realm removed from the mundane, a sphere of refinement and sophistication shared among friends on visits around Suzhou. The style of the time used unglazed ceramic wares from Yixing, brewing the tea in the pot, and drinking from early Ming porcelains or Song and Yuan celadons. At gatherings, the tea master was the center of a day devoted to artistic, literary, and culinary pursuits; his role was something akin to a master of ceremony. Wang Lai 王淶 (1459-1528) was a favorite in Suzhou circles, traveling by boat, leisurely wandering here and there, “whistling and swaggering about in the mists and waves.” Remembered as a witty and brilliant conversationalist, Wang Lai often stayed as a guest in the garden studio of Shen Chou, frequently presenting the elder gentleman with a gift of rare tea.

Once in the winter of 1497, Shen Chou was joined at his house by four other literati for an intimate gathering at which Wang Lai prepared and served tea. The marvelously subtle art demonstrated by Wang Lai during the party so moved Shen Chou that he wrote an essay in praise of the tea master. The work no longer survives, but it was recorded that: “Shen Chou dedicated ‘Gathering for Tea’ to Wang Lai. Wang is fond of tea and his style of tea preparation is especially wonderful. He often brings Shen Chou beautiful tea, brewing and serving it to the old man, always in this fine manner. At this gathering, the old man sipped through seven cups and savored the full beauty of it all.”

Late Ming
For over a millennium, the history of Korean tea grew in complexity and depth, spreading throughout the culture until one day a Joseon king declared that Korea had no custom of tea. The king’s declaration baldly
contradicted the long Korean tea tradition. That anyone, even a king, should utter such a thing was astonishing. But in fact, the king’s statement accurately reflected the extraordinary pressures on the kingdom in the late sixteenth century and the desperate circumstance of Korean tea.

In the spring of 1597, the Wanli emperor 萬曆帝 (1572-1620 C.E.) received an urgent message from King Seonjo 宣祖선조 (reign 1567-1608) of Korea. The king reported that Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1537-1598 C.E.) had once again sent an army across the straits and on to Korean soil intent on conquest and destruction. In response, Wanli dispatched emergency troops under the general Yang Hao to defend the Korean capital.

Yang Hao 楊鎬 (died 1629) was a scholar from Honan and a former magistrate of Kiangsi, both provinces lying in the heartland of China’s tea culture. During his military inspection of Korea, Yang Hao noted a variety of tea growing in the southern province of Jolla near the ancient town of Namwon. In an audience with King Seonjo, General Yang recommended the cultivation and production of tea. His plan included the sale of Korean tea to the traders and merchants on the northern borders, lucrative sales that could provide the silver for the purchase of Tibetan horses to use in the imminent fight against the Japanese:

“Your esteemed country has tea...it is a product of Namwon and its quality is very good...If picked and sold in Liaotung, it is worth a tenth of an ounce of silver for every ten catties and thus tea could become a means of national support. The western tribes [Tibetans] delight in fatty and oily foods; a day without drinking tea and they would die. China picks tea to sell to them and receives in return an annual herd of ten thousand horses of war.”

The general further observed the marked lack of tea drinking among the Korean populace generally and specifically the absence of tea at court in official etiquette. Yang Hao pointedly asked the Korean sovereign, “Why does your country not drink tea?”

The royal response took the form of a simple but remarkable statement: “Lord Yang...it is the custom of our country not to drink tea.” Standing before the serene sovereign, Yang Hao hid his surprise and amazement. Then, Yang slowly realized the truth of the king’s words.

In Korea, tea had long been relegated to ceremonial use, and by
the late sixteenth century tea had all but disappeared from daily life. Drinking tea may have survived among Buddhist monks and villagers, among distant temples and hermitages of the south, but it took two hundred years before the literatus Dasan Jeong Yak-Yong다산 정약용 (1762-1836 C.E.) started introducing tea to Zen masters. When Dasan met the learned and Venerable Cho-ui Ui-son艸衣意恂 초의의순 (1786-1866 C.E.) the event began a remarkable friendship and sparked a brief revival of tea Koreana.

Qing dynasty
In 1644, the Manchu tribes rode off the northern steppes to conquer the Ming, taking over the Forbidden City in Beijing as their Chinese capital and establishing the Qing dynasty. The most glorious ruler of the dynasty was the Qianlong emperor乾隆帝 (reign 1735-1796), who ascended the throne in 1735 at the age of twenty four to reign for sixty one years. This is a story of Qianlong and his fondness for milk tea.

In middle age, the emperor had long settled into a daily routine. After hold court and meetings all morning, he retired to the private residences at the rear of the palace where he lunched and then spent the rest of the day at his pleasure.

As Qianlong began his afternoon of reading, painting, or writing poetry, he nodded to his eunuch to call for a pot of tea. The attendant bowed and hurried to relay the order through the palace to a special place known as the “tea kitchen” where a Mongolian tea master waited on call to prepare the beverage. Shortly, a train of servants arrived bearing a subtly decorated bowl of white jade, a carved jade teapot, and a small jade tray of pastries. Qianlong looked up from his book gratefully to receive the bowl, now filled with his favorite drink, a rich, coffee-colored liquid known as milk tea. Milk tea was drunk by all the nomads on the grasslands of the vast steppes. Made with tea, water, milk, butter, and salt, milk tea had sustained the tribes for over a thousand years.

The milk tea bowl of white jade was kept in the Hall for Nurturing the Heart. Unlike the huge, cavernous halls of the outer palace, the Hall for Nurturing the Heart was Qianlong’s private study, a very small, secluded apartment at the back of the inner palace, protected by many gates and walls, and near the emperor’s garden. Off the study was a tiny sitting room was just comfortable for but a single person to lounge or stand in. An extremely close and intimate space, it was the emperor’s sole place of refuge from family and court. Here, Qianlong read and wrote
poetry, peacefully enclosed in a cocoon of favorite books and art, nodding to his eunuch now and then to order milk tea. The bowl that he kept by him and always used was made of a lovely white jade finely carved with very faint floral designs and handles of pendant flower buds.

Setting aside his books, Qianlong lifted the jade vessel with two hands and took a long draught, filling his mouth with the full weight and feel of the hot, creamy mixture before swallowing. A small sigh escaped his lips as he took another sip and thought how utterly satisfying milk tea was to him. Qianlong then smiled as he remembered when once asked how the empire could do a day without its emperor, he had waggishly replied, “How can the emperor do a single day without his tea?” -- an oblique but mischievous play on an old Manchu saying, “Rather go three days without eating than go a single day without tea.” Although made in jest, the remark revealed that Qianlong was truly addicted to milk tea and, indeed, could not do without it.

But Qianlong never worried about his favorite drink. He drank it throughout the day, and it was always at hand, made by the tea master, and supplied by the abundant tea tribute and milk from the imperial herd. The emperor had fifty head of cattle that produced one hundred thirty pounds of milk a day. According to palace regulation, Qianlong’s daily allowance of milk tea required the entire herd’s production, twelve pitchers of water from Jade Spring at the Summer Palace, one pound of butter, and seventy-five packets of tea at two ounces a pack. Although the emperor might never drink all of the milk tea allotted to him, he would never lack for it either. When the emperor drank his last bowl of milk tea for the day, the tea master was sent out of the palace, returning the following morning to repeat his single task.

In 1781, at the age of seventy, Qianlong composed a poem to honor the white jade bowl he enjoyed using and had the inscription engraved around the body. Qianlong praised the fine color and look of the jade as “mutton fat,” but he struggled to describe the “fluttering and fleeting” quality of the carved design, ineptly comparing its ephemeral character to the fragility of mulberry paper. Finally, he surrendered and confessed to being positively abashed, unable to justly express the full and virtuous nature of the bowl. But in penance and in adoration of its singular beauty, Qianlong always kept the bowl in his little study and within his easy reach. Until the very end of his days, the white jade vessel remained the emperor’s favorite bowl, and from it Qianlong drank his fill of milk tea, his favorite drink.
Steven D. Owyoung was born in San Francisco in 1947. After a museum career as a curator of Asian art, he retired and now pursues studies in the history of tea in East Asia. He has given university and museum lectures on Chinese and Japanese tea for the last twenty years and written extensively on the Chinese history, literature, and poetry of tea. He is currently preparing a book on the ChaJing, Book of Tea, by the tea master Lu Yü of the Tang Dynasty. This paper is the text of a lecture originally presented at The Tea Institute of Penn State University, April 5, 2012; selected portions on the Qing dynasty were originally published in the blog Cha Dao, April 6, 2007.
Anyone who begins to explore the history of tea-drinking in Korea soon encounters a few names of writers from earlier centuries who have left their mark on the Korean Way of Tea, either by something they wrote or by their example. The life-stories of these men, who were either scholars or monks, serve to illustrate vividly some of the challenges facing the political elite in the Joseon dynasty; exile and execution are frequently recurring events. In what follows, one aim is to try to sense something of the human reality underlying dry historical facts, including the love of tea shared by each of those evoked. The first set of stories concerns a little-known scholar, Yi Mok, who composed the earliest known Korean treatise about tea shortly before his execution at the early age of twenty-eight, in the closing years of the fifteenth century. The second section begins with the life of the scholar widely known as Dasan, Jeong Yak-yong, together with some mention of his brothers, and ends with the death of the Venerable Cho-ui in 1866, covering the first half of the nineteenth century.

The Joseon Dynasty began in 1392, at the end of Goryeo, with a change in the royal family from the Wang of Goryeo to the Yi of Joseon. In the decades following, there was strong tension between aristocratic men who had been faithful servants of the Goryeo kings and had retired to the countryside rather than serve the new regime, and the “turncoats” who had accepted the new royal line and devoted themselves to serving the good of the state. Confucianist purists insisted that it was not possible to “serve two masters”. Many people today who have heard of the marvels performed by the fourth king of Joseon, King Sejong the Great (ruled 1418-1450), do not realize what troubles followed his death. His eldest surviving son, King Munjong (1414-1452), was weak in health and died barely two years after becoming king. He left the throne to his twelve-year-old son, known as Danjong (1441-1457). Munjong's brothers, princes
Suyang and Anpyeong were both dynamic, ambitious men who feared the influence of powerful ministers over the sickly Munjong and above all, once he was dead, over the child Danjong. Suyang outmaneuvered his brother when Munjong died; in 1453 he had Prince Anpyeong exiled, then executed by poison, and killed the two ministers Munjong had appointed to act as regents. This incident is known as the *Gyeyu-jeongdan*, the first of a series of political purges named after the year in which they occurred.

Prince Suyang became King Sejo, the seventh king of Joseon, and ruled 1455-1468, having deposed his nephew, Danjong. In 1457, officials (led by the “Six Martyred Ministers”) plotted to restore Danjong, and some seventy were executed for treason (the purge known as the *Byeongja-sahwa*). Danjong, who had been demoted to the rank of prince, was exiled for several months on an isolated stretch of sand (*Cheongnyeongpo*) at the foot of a cliff in the West River (Seo-gang) at Yeongweol in Gangwon Province. He was then forced to drink poison or strangled, or perhaps both.

Sejo was by formation a very talented scholar who had been involved in many of the intellectual ventures during the reign of Sejong. But the idea that a king might be deposed was anathema to traditional ideas, and King Sejo was criticized by the more conservative families while a number of reputed scholars (the “Six Loyal Subjects”) withdrew to a life of exile in rural areas (*sarim*) away from the court. With time, some ministers gained great power by marriage with the royal family. When Sejo died in 1468, his second son became King Yejong, but he died the following year, aged barely twenty, and Sejo's grandson, the son of his elder son, who had also died in his twentieth year a few years before, became King Seongjong. The new king was still only in his twelfth year. It was not until 1467 that he reached his majority and began to exercise royal authority. From the start, fearing that the established ministers and their families (later known as the *hungu* faction) were becoming too powerful, he attempted to counter their power by bringing into court members of the more strictly Confucian *sarim* families. At the same time he took steps to diminish the influence of Buddhism, which had been encouraged by both Sejong and Sejo.

Yi Mok’s teacher, Jeompiljae Kim Jong-jik (1431-1492), was one of the first to be promoted by Seongjong and is thus considered the founder of the *sarim* court faction. By 1484, several others had risen to positions of influence, all of them from the south-eastern region and all following the strict Confucian ideal of “not following two masters,” in the footsteps of those scholars who had been in opposition to the initial rise of
the Joseon dynasty. In the following centuries, their influence inspired the conservative, narrow form of Confucianism that came to dominate Joseon and which so opposed the Silhak (practical learning) school of men such as Dasan. At some point, Kim Jong-jik wrote a veiled attack on King Sejo's usurpation, called the Jœuije-mun (Lament for the Righteous Emperor), a poetic text seemingly deploring the death of King Huai of Chu on the orders of the usurping Xiang Yu, in ancient Chinese history. Several years after Kim Jong-jik died, one of his pupils, Kim Il-son, inserted the Lament into the official posthumous chronicle of the reign of King Seongjong, who died in 1494, and it was spotted there by members of the rival hungu faction, who realized its hidden meaning.

Sejo’s great-grandson, today known as Yeonsan (reigned 1494-1506), was at first a good king, if at times ruthless, but he is said to have become dissolute, and finally insane. His life story is so striking that it has been the subject of novels and movies, although many of the details may have been added later. The commonly received version, as found in Wikipedia, relates that, “Deposed Queen Yun, formally known as Queen Jeheon, served Prince Yeonsan's father, Seongjong, as a concubine until the death of Queen Gonghye, Seongjong's first wife. With no royal heir, the king was urged by counselors to take a second wife to secure the royal succession. Lady Yun was chosen for her beauty, and was formally married to the king in 1476. Several months later, she gave birth to her first son, Yi Yung, later to become Prince Yeonsan. The new queen proved to be temperamental and highly jealous of Seongjong's concubines living inside the palace, even stooping to poisoning one in 1477. In 1479, she physically struck the king one night, leaving scratch marks. Despite efforts to conceal the injury, Seongjong's mother, Insu Daebi, discovered the truth and ordered Lady Yun, now known as the Deposed Queen Yun, into exile. After several popular attempts to restore the deposed Queen to her position at court, government officials petitioned that she be poisoned.” Her baby son was apparently brought up in ignorance of his mother's fate.

In 1498, the king learned from his closest advisor of Kim Jong-jik's attack on his great-grandfather, King Sejo, and launched the Muo Sahwa, in which many members of the sarim faction were killed. Kim’s body was exhumed and decapitated and many of his former pupils were executed. This purge was followed a few years later by the infamous Gapcha Sahwa of 1504. The king seems to have gone mad on finally being told how his birth mother had died. He ordered the execution of concubines, and of many leading figures from both factions, and is even said to have provoked the death of his elderly grandmother by striking her.
Finally, his ministers deposed him in favor of his half-brother, who became King Jungjong, and Yeonsan died very soon after, in exile, although it is not clear whether he was killed. His wife and children were certainly killed, as were his closest advisers. He was no longer king at his death, so he has no “temple name” ending in -jo, he is known to posterity as Yeonsan-gun, Prince Yeonsan.

When we turn to the history of Korean tea, the first difficulty we face is the lack of documents from the Goryeo period. It is usually assumed that tea-drinking, which had been introduced from China along with Buddhism in the earlier Silla period, continued to be widely practiced in the strongly Buddhist Goryeo period. Tea trees had been planted near temples in the southern areas quite early on. Yet from the early Joseon period, when records start to be more plentiful, there is no sign of tea being drunk as a sophisticated or civilized pursuit anywhere, in the court, by scholars or by monks. It might be that this decline had already begun under Goryeo.

The only exception we find is that Jeompilje Kim Jong-jik (1431 - 1492) wrote a poem about planting a new tea field. It is preserved in volume 10 of the Jeompilje-jip (畢齋集卷) anthology of his writings. Kim Jong-jik was Gunsu (prefect) of Hamyang-gun, South Gyeongsang province, for 5 years from 1471 until 1476. He established a new tea-field. In 1474, surveying the flourishing plantation, he composed the following 2 stanzas.

티거
Tea Garden

浴奉靈苗壽聖君
I longed to offer his majesty tea in tribute
新羅遺種久無聞
but I could not find seeds transmitted since Silla times.
如今擷得頭流下
At last I got some, gathered at the foot of Mount Duryu (Jiri-san)
且喜吾民寬一分
and I am all the happier since our people have a little more ease now.

竹外荒園數畝坡
On the wide field on the hillside beyond the bamboos
紫英鳥嘴幾時誇
At first sight, it might seem that we have here an indication that Joseon-era scholars continued to cultivate the Way of Tea. However, the introduction to the poem suggests a very different reason for planting the tea field. In the official list of local products from each township, *Sinjeung-dong-guk-yeoji-seung-nam* (新增東國輿地勝覽, 1481 revised 1530), we find *Jakseol*-*cha* (tea) included as one of the local products designated to be offered in tribute by the population of Hamyang-*gun*. *Jaksol*-*cha* obviously used to grow there but at some point prior to the reign of King Seongjong it vanished. Kim writes: “The tea which the townsfolk were obliged to offer up in tribute did not grow in the region. Every year when the levy was due they would take goods, exchange them for tea in Jeolla province and send that up. Usually the rate was one *mal* of rice for one *hop* of tea. When I was appointed, I learned of this evil practice and rather than imposing a levy on the people I borrowed government funds from the *Gwana* (government office) and so sent up the tribute tea. I had already read in the *Samguk-sagi* that in Silla times tea seeds sent from Tang China had been planted in Jiri-san. Now our town is at the foot of that very mountain, so are there none of those seeds sent in Silla times still remaining? Every time I met local leaders I would ask. Finally, I obtained a few bushes from the bamboo grove to the north of Eomcheon-*sa* temple 嚴川寺 (in the region of what is now Jinju). I was really happy. I had a tea-field planted. All around were people’s fields so I bought the ground as government (*Gwana*) land. After a few years had passed, the plants had flourished and spread wide. If we waited 4-5 more years, we should be able to gather the required quantity. So I composed a poem in 2 stanzas.”

It seems clear that he had no thought of using the tea for himself, that he knew nothing about tea-drinking as a refined pursuit. His sole concern was to help the local people grow the leaves they were obliged to send up to Seoul. It is one of Kim’s pupils, Yi Mok, who brings us closer to the refined culture of tea. Hanjae Yi Mok (1471-1498) was born in the seventh month in the second year of the reign of King Seongjong (r 1469-
Tea in Early and Later Joseon

1495) in Gageum-ri, in what is now Haseong-myeon, Gimpo city in Gyeonggi Province to the west of Seoul, the second son of Yi Yun-Saeng (dates unknown) who had the title of Chamui, Third Minister. His clan was a branch of the royal Jeonju Yi clan. He began schooling in his eighth year, and in his fourteenth year became the pupil of the scholar Jeompiljae Kim Jong-Jik. In 1489, he passed the First State Examination (Chinsagwa) and entered the Confucian Academy (Seonggyun’gwang).

While he was studying, the king fell sick and his mother ordered a shaman to enter the palace and pray for his recovery. As Confucians, the students disapproved strongly; they went and drove the shaman away with clubs. The king, furious, ordered a list of the students to be made and all but Yi Mok ran away; impressed by his sincerity, the king is said to have praised him and sent a gift of wine. However, Yi Mok was later sent in exile to Gongju for a time, returning to Seoul in his 21st year. In his 25th year he went to study in Beijing for a few months. While he was in China he seems to have been in contact with scholars who introduced him directly to the Ming dynasty practices of tea and to the main Chinese texts about tea, which clearly underlie his writing about tea.

There is no indication as to when or why he composed the ChaBu (Rhapsody to Tea), which is unlike any other text devoted to the Way of Tea found in Korea or China, although the influence of the Classic of Tea and other Taoist Chinese tea texts is evident in it. The most striking absence is the total lack of any mention of tea being grown or drunk in Korea. The text is only about the Chinese tea tradition. We soon realize how intensely Yi Mok has absorbed the Taoist vision of nature that gave birth to Chinese and Korean landscape painting:

Only yonder beautiful tea tree, ahead of all the rest, advances toward early spring, monopolizing the heavens. Russet, light green, dark green, yellow, early, late, short, long, issuing from the roots, rising through branches, sending out leaves, offering shade, spitting out shoots of pure gold, lushly jade-green, forming forests luxuriantly dense, sensuously beautiful, wonderful and stately, like clouds rising and mists thickening, truly the most glorious sight under Heaven! I pick and pluck the tender buds. Buds plucked and gathered and loaded on my back, I return to the valley. (ChaBu Section 4)

Bring out a jade bowl and wash it yourself, boil water from a rocky spring, then observe how the pale steam brims at the lip of the bowl like summer clouds issuing from mountain streams and peaks, and white billowing waves form as if dashing down a swollen river in
spring. The sound of water boiling blows, whistling like a frosty wind through bamboos and pines, while the fragrance of the brewed tea drifts like a ship of war, flying towards the Red Cliff. (*ChaBu* Section 5)

By allowing people to enjoy long lives, it has the virtue of longevity of the Emperors Yao and Shun; by curing diseases, it has the virtue of benevolence of the doctors Yu Fu and Bian Que; by easing people’s minds, it has the noble integrity of Bo Yi and Yang Zhen; by making people’s hearts glad, it has the virtue of the Two Old Men and the Four Greybeards of Mount Shang; by enabling people to become immortal, it possesses the lofty virtues of the Yellow Emperor and Laozi; by providing people with ceremony, it bestows the virtue of civility of Ji Dan and Confucius. (*ChaBu* Section 7)

Wisdom is to float like an empty boat on water; Benevolence is to admire the trees and fruit of the mountain. When the spirit moves the heart, it enters the Wondrous, even without seeking pleasure, pleasure arises. This is the tea of my heart, it is needless to seek another. (*ChaBu* Section 8)

On returning from China, he took the *Daegwa* (Higher State Examination) in 1495 and was awarded the highest place. In his 26th year he was appointed to a junior administrative position over the military in what is now South Hamgyeong Province (in today's North Korea) but in the following year he was given leave and continued his studies in private; in this year his son Yi Se-Jang (1497-1562) was born. 1498 saw the *Muo Sahwa*, and on the 26th day of the 7th month of 1498 Hanjae Yi Mok, having been one of Kim Jong-jik's most cherished pupils, was executed. He is reported to have behaved with great courage, writing a final poem, then calmly going out to execution as if nothing special were happening to him.

In 1504, during the *Gapcha Sahwa* a second condemnation was delivered against the deceased Yi Mok and his bones were dug up. After a change in factional power in 1552, Yi Mok's reputation was restored. In 1717-22 various posthumous titles and honors were bestowed on him, including the title *Ijopanseo* (Minister of Personnel). In 1726, under King Yeongjo, permission was given for him to be honored in a special shrine as well as in a Confucian academy in Gongju and another shrine in Jeonju. His grave with its modern memorial shrine in Gimpo is still the site of
Tea in Early and Late Joseon

Tea in Early Joseon Dynasty

Tea in the later Joseon Dynasty

Tea, we may say with some assurance, was only known in most of the Joseon dynasty when scholars and diplomats brought some back from China. There is no record indicating that anyone picked, prepared and drank it for pleasure in Korea. The first extensive text about Korean tea-making known from the Joseon dynasty is *Bupung Hyangcha Bo* (扶風鄉茶譜 Record of native tea made at Buan c1756) by Pilseon Yi Un-hae (1710 - ?). Extracts from the text of the *Bupung Hyangcha Bo* survived by being included in the diary of Hwang Yun-seok (黃胤錫 1729-1791) known as *YiJaeNanGo* (頤齋亂藁), following the last entry in the diary, dated the 26th day of the 6th month, 1757. The diary is preserved (as is Hwang’s home) at Gochang, North Jeolla province. Yi Un-hae wrote:

I heard that there was famous tea growing at Seonun-sa temple in Bupung. Neither officials nor ordinary folk knew how to drink it, they treated the bushes as mere weeds and used them for kindling, so they were in a bad state. I sent servants from the *Gwana* (government office) to pick and bring me some. It was just the right time for making new tea so we made seven different kinds of tea.

The tea that Yi made was a medicine:

The tea mixed with the other (medicinal) ingredient is dried over a fire; once dry, it is placed in a cloth bag and kept in a dry place. First, two larger cups (jon) of clean water are brought to the boil in a tea kettle. After the water has boiled for a while, the tea is added. One jeon of tea should be used; it should be served strongly brewed and drunk while very hot.

Being a scholar, it may be that Yi knew the Chinese *Chajing* (Tea Classic), for some of his knowledge of tea seems to rely on older books from China:

Bitter tea is also called *jakseol* (sparrows’ tongues). It has a rather cold quality but is not poisonous. The bushes are small, similar to gardenia bushes. The leaves grow in winter; those picked early are

regular ceremonies by his descendants. Recently a small grove of tea bushes has been planted there, from which tea is made for offerings in his shrine.
called “cha” and those picked later “myeong.” The different names, cha, ga, seol, myeong, cheon etc all depend on whether the tea was picked early or late. Tea produced in the last lunar month is called “barley grain tea.” Many buds are picked, pounded, formed into cakes and roasted. Tough old leaves are called “cheon.” It is best drunk hot. When cold it causes phlegm. If drunk over a long period, it removes fat and makes one dry.

By far the most important text about tea prior to Cho-ui’s DongChaSong is the DongChaGi (東茶記 Record of Korean Tea) which Cho-ui refers to in his poem. This was written by Yi Deok-ni (1728 - ?) in about 1785 while he was in exile in Jindo, in southern Jeolla. He had been there since 1776. A full text has only recently discovered in the home of descendants of Dasan’s youngest disciple in Gangjin, close to Dasan’s home there. This text confirms what Yi Un-hae wrote about the widespread ignorance regarding tea: “In our Eastern Land (Korea) tea grows in various localities of Honam (the south-west) and Yeongnam (the south-east). The places listed in the (official geographical texts) Dongguk yeoji seungnam (東國輿地勝覽) and the Gosa chwalyo (故事撮要) etc are only one tenth, one hundredth of the total. It is customary in our land to use what is known as “jakseol” in medicines but most people do not realize that “cha” and “jakseol” are the same thing. The reason is that for a long time now nobody has made “cha” (tea) or drunk tea. Supposing some dilettante buys tea at a market in China and brings it back, nobody knows how to appreciate it, although our lands are close.”

One fascinating detail learned from the DongChaGi is that significant quantities of tea from China reached Joseon in 1760: “Once tea reached Korea by ship in Gyeongjin year (1760), the whole country learned what tea looks like. It was drunk widely for the next ten years, and although stocks were exhausted a long time ago now, nobody knows how to pick and make more. Since tea is not so important for our countrymen, it is obvious that they are unconcerned whether it exists here or not.” There are other records of a Chinese ship reaching Gunsan on the west coast in 1762 with a large cargo of “Yellow tea” which seems to have provided the limited Joseon market with enough tea for several decades.

There are no signs of any “refined” tea culture existing in Korea at this time, apart from a paragraph in Yi Deok-ni’s DongChaGi which indicates that at least a few refined scholars cultivated a serious practice of Chinese tea: “In the spring of Gyehae year (1743) I visited Sangodang
(Oaryong-am, the home of the scholar Kim Gwang-su) and drank tea that the master had been sent by a certain gentleman from Liaoyang; the leaves were small, with no stalks, so that I thought it was like the tea mentioned by Sun Qiao, plucked to the sound of thunder. It was the third lunar month, the flowers had not yet faded in the garden. Our host had prepared places beneath the pines, close to a tea-brazier; brazier and utensils were all Chinese antiques and we each enjoyed a cup.” Yet even there, he reports, the talk soon turned to the medicinal qualities of tea.

Now it is time to evoke the stories of two scholars who lived three centuries after Yi Mok and who also experienced exile and political turmoil, Jeong Yak-yong and Kim Jeong-hui, and of two remarkable monks, Hyejang and Cho-ui, who befriended them. What unites them with Yi Mok is their interest in the Way of Tea. This part of the story begins at the start of the 19th century. A scholar had just been sent into exile. His name was Jeong Yak-yong, he was in his fortieth year. His exile began in the last days of 1801, on the 23rd day of the eleventh lunar month, the 28th of December in our solar calendar. On that day, he arrived in Gangjin, South Jeolla Province. The newly-arrived exile had little or no money and no friends; he found shelter in a small room of a poor, rundown tavern kept by a widow, outside the East Gate of the walled township of Gangjin, and there he lived until 1805. He called his room “Sauijae” (room of four obligations: clear thinking, serious appearance, quiet talking, sincere actions). The story of the events leading up to that moment would be enough to fill a book in themselves. It brings us in direct contact with some of the most dramatic events of Joseon history.

From 1776 until his death in the summer of 1800, the king of Joseon had been King Jeongjo, one of the most enlightened kings of the dynasty. His father had been Crown Prince Sado, whose outrageous and sadistic behavior became such a scandal that in 1762 his father, King Yeongjo, had him enclosed in a rice chest in front of a hall in Changgyeong-gung palace, where he was left until he died a full week later. That whole story is related in the fascinating memoirs written by Jeongjo’s mother, usually known by the title her son bestowed on her as Hong Hyegyeonggung, it is not known if she ever had a personal name. The future king was ten years old when his father was killed, and it was naturally a traumatic event. For years he and his demoted mother were kept apart.

After becoming king in 1776, Jeongjo did everything he could to express his respect for his father, moving his (deliberately) humble grave
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to a much more honorable site at Yungneung near today’s Suwon. In 1794, he began to build a new ‘temporary’ palace and walled city nearby, Hwaseong Haenggung, now the city of Suwon, perhaps even planning to move the capital away from the factional intrigues of Hanyang (Seoul). In 1796 he celebrated his mother’s 60th birthday there. The man in charge of the engineering and architecture for this huge project was none other than our Gangjin exile, Jeong Yak-yong. He had been one of the deceased king’s most trusted and closest advisors. So what brought him to disgrace and exile? As he began his life in that rural tavern, far from his friends and family, he must have spent time thinking about the events of recent months.

Jeong Yak-yong’s father was Jeong Jae-won (丁載遠, 1730-1792). His eldest brother Yak-hyeon (若銉, 1751-1821) was the son of a first wife, while Jeong Yak-jong (若鍾, 1760-1801), Yak-jeon (若銓, 1758-1816), and Yak-yong were the sons of their father’s second wife, Suk-in (淑人, 1730-1770) from the celebrated Haenam Yun尹 family. There was one daughter from this second marriage. Four other daughters were later born of a third marriage. Their father’s family traced their descent back to Jeong Ja-geup (丁子伋, 1423-1487) who in 1460 first took a government position under King Sejo. Eight further generations then followed his example. Jeong Si-yun (丁時潤, 1646-1713) and his second son Do-bok (道復, 1666-1720) were the last of the line, since the Namin (Southerners) faction to which the family belonged lost power in 1694. Si-yun retired to a house in Mahyeon-ri to the east of Seoul (now known as Namyangju) in 1699, which was to be Jeong Yak-yong’s birthplace. His eldest son, Do-tae (道泰) lived there and was their direct ancestor. The Southerners remained excluded from official positions until a brief period that began during the reign of King Jeongjo, when Jeong Yak-yong’s father was appointed magistrate of Jinju county, thanks to his strong links with the powerful Chae Je-gong (蔡濟恭, 1720-99), who rose until he was appointed third state councillor in 1788 and later Prime Minister.

In 1762, the execution of Crown Prince Sado by his father the king so shocked Jeong Jae-won that he withdrew from official life and returned to his home in Mahyeon-ri. As a result, Jeong Yak-yong grew up receiving intense intellectual training from his now unoccupied father. The source of his intellectual interests can be traced to the influence of the great scholar Udam Jeong Si-han (愚潭 丁時翰, 1625-1707) of the same
clan, who taught Jeong Si-yun briefly and was then the main teacher of theirs ancestor Jeong Do-tae as well as his brother Do-je (1675-1729). One of the most significant thinkers in the next generation was the philosopher-scholar Seongho Yi Ik (星湖 李滉, 1681-1763) and he saw Udam as the authentic heir of the great thinker Toegye Yi Hwang (退溪 李滉, 1501–1570). Jeong Do-je transmitted the teachings of Udam to the next generations of the family and so they were passed to Jeong Yak-yong’s father and Dasan himself.

Similarly, Jeong Yak-yong’s mother was descended from the family of the famous Southerner scholar-poet Gosan Yun Seon-do (孤山 尹善道, 1587-1671). Yun’s great-grandson Gongjae Yun Du-seo (恭齋 尹斗緖, 1668-1715), well-known for his skills as a painter, was their maternal great-grandfather. He and his elder brother were close to Seongho Yi Ik and his brothers, and are credited with reviving the study of the Six Classics, as well as the thought of Toegye.

In 1776, Jeong Yak-yong was married to Hong Hwabo of the Pungsan Hong clan, the daughter of a royal secretary; in that year he moved to Seoul, where his father received an appointment in the Board of Taxation after the accession of King Jeongjo. When he was 15, he was introduced to the writings of Seongho Yi Ik by two of his descendants, Yi Ga-Hwan (李家煥, 1742-1801) and his brother-in-law Yi Seung-hun (李承薰, 1756-1801) and he was deeply impressed, resolving to devote his life to similar studies. In 1783, Jeong Yak-yong passed the chinsagwa (literary licentiate examination), which allowed him to enter the Seonggyungwan (national Confucian academy). In 1784 the king was deeply impressed by the “objectivity” of his replies to a set of questions he had formulated. This was the start of an increasingly close relationship between the king and Jeong Yak-yong. After the promotion of Chae Jegong in 1788, he took top place in the daegwa (higher civil service exam) in 1789 and was offered a position in the Office of Royal Decrees, together with 5 other members of the Southerner faction. This alarmed members of the opposing ‘Old Doctrine’ faction, who soon realized the extent to which the Southerners were being influenced, not only by the Practical Learning introduced to China from Europe, but by Catholicism itself.

In 1784, Yi Byeok (李蘗, 1754-1786), a scholar who had participated in meetings to study books about the Western (European) Learning, starting in 1777, talked with Jeong Yak-yong about the new
religion and gave him a book about it. Whatever his response may have been, his immediate family was already deeply involved in the origins of the Korean Catholic community. He himself seems later to have denied receiving baptism, while Lee Seung-hun insisted that he had baptized him with the other first coverts. His older sister was married to Yi Seung-hun, the Korean who was first baptized as a Catholic in Beijing in 1784 and played a leading role in the early years of the Church’s growth. The oldest of Jeong Jae-won’s sons, Jeong Yak-hyeon, was married to a sister of Yi Byeok. Another daughter, from a third marriage, later married Hwang Sa-yeong (1775-1801), author of the notorious Silk Letter.

Dark clouds began to gather in 1791. Two years before, Yun Ji-chung, one of the first baptized and a cousin to Jeong Yak-yong on his mother’s side, had gone to Beijing and received confirmation. He learned that Rome had forbidden Catholics to perform ancestral rituals and that his was now being strictly applied by the Portuguese Franciscan bishop of Beijing, Alexandre de Gouveia. When his mother died in 1791, Yun therefore refused to perform the usual Confucian ceremonies; this became public knowledge, he was accused of impiety and was executed. Some Koreans who had at first been sympathetic, horrified by the Church’s rejection of hallowed traditions, turned away. Jeong Yak-yong may well have been among them, for his later writings stress the significance of rituals.

The second problem was the arrival in Korea in 1795 of the country’s first Catholic priest, a Chinese named Zhou Wenmo. This confirmed suspicions that this new teaching was a foreign threat. Then in 1799 the Prime Minister died, and in 1800 the king died. They had both been open-minded men who tolerated the conversion to Catholicism of some of their close advisers. The new king, Sunjo, was still only a child and power fell into the hands of the widow of King Yeongjo, known as Queen Dowager Kim or Queen Jeong-sun. Her family belonged to the factions opposed to the reformist Catholic Namin group and she had been completely powerless during Jeongjo’s reign. She at once launched an attack on the Catholics, who were denounced as traitors and enemies of the state.

Jeong Yak-jong was the head of the Catholic community, he was one of the first to be arrested and executed, together with Yi Seung-hun, the first to be baptized, in the spring of 1801. Yak-jong’s eldest son, Jeong Cheol-sang, died then too, executed a month after his father. His second wife, Yu So-sa, was later to be martyred in 1839, as were his other son, Paul Jeong Ha-sang, who had become the main leader of the Catholic community in his turn, and his daughter Jeong Jeong-hye. They are
venerated as Catholic saints, canonized in 1984, but the element of factional politics involved in the 1801 persecutions has so far prevented the Catholic Church from recognizing those killed then as martyrs for the faith. There are hopes that this may soon change.

Since he was Jeong Yak-jong's younger brother, Jeong Yak-yong was sent into exile for some months in Janggi fortress in what is now Pohang, having been found after interrogation with torture not to be a Catholic believer. That might have been that, but what brought Yak-yong to Gangjin, where he was forced to spend eighteen years, was the event that served as the final nail in the coffin of the early Catholic community. Hwang Sa-yong was a young Catholic of high birth. Fearing for his life, he hid in a cave during the persecutions and in October 1801 he finished writing a long letter to the bishop of Beijing, giving a detailed account of the recent events, asking him to bring pressure on the Korean authorities to allow freedom of religion and, disastrously, begging him to ask the Western nations to send a force to overthrow the Joseon dynasty so that Korea would be subject to China, where Catholicism was permitted. The man carrying this letter, written on a roll of silk wrapped round his body, was intercepted and the Korean authorities made full use of it to show that Catholics were by definition enemies of the state. The persecution was intensified and if it had not been very clear that Jeong Yak-yong and Jeong Yak-jeon were in no sense Catholic believers, they would surely have been executed. Instead they were sent into exile together, parting ways at Naju, from where Jeong Yak-hyeon journeyed on to the island of Heuksan-do, Yak-yong taking the Gangjin road.

One might expect Jeong Yak-yong to be feeling that his active life was well and truly over as he arrived in that remote outpost. He had not simply designed and built the Suwon Hwaseong fortress in less than 3 years, he had incorporated the most modern fortress designs from Korea, China and Japan along with contemporary science into his plans. Use of brick as a building material for the fortress and employment of efficient pulleys and cranes were also due to the influence of Silhak. Perhaps most revolutionary of all, he and the king had agreed that the men working on the construction should be fed and paid by the state, instead of being used as slave labor as was the custom. Just after the king's death, a complete 10-volume report on the entire process was deposited in the national archive, going into minute detail with blueprints, lists of materials, everything was recorded for posterity.

As a political exile, he was hardly likely to find a warm welcome in Gangjin and at first he was probably closely watched, almost confined
to the tavern. By 1805, however, much had changed in Seoul. Dowager Queen Kim had died and the young king had come of age and quickly put an end to the violence against Catholics. Three hundred had been killed and many of the rest were exiled or scattered, or had stopped practicing. Jeong Yak-yong was free to move about the Gangjin area and in the spring of 1805 he walked up the hills behind Gangjin as far as Baengnyeon-sa Temple, where he met the Venerable Hyejang, the newly-arrived monk in charge of the temple, who was about 10 years younger than himself. They talked and it seems that Hyejang only realized who his visitor was as he was leaving. He forced him to stay with him and soon asked to learn from him. They quickly became close companions.

This was no ordinary monk. Born in 1772, he had been sent to become a monk as a child because his family was too poor to raise him. He spent many years at Daeheung-sa temple near Haenam. There, he studied and practiced meditation under famous masters and by 1796 had become the temple’s official lecturer. He had just come to take charge of the small temple above Gangjin when our exile first met him. All accounts agree that the two men immediately established a close relationship, which was expressed in their ongoing exchanges of letters and poems. Hyejang studied Confucian and Taoist topics under the exile, who in turn probably learned more about Buddhism from the monk. It must have been a great joy for Jeong Yak-yong to find a sensitive, open-minded companion after years of loneliness. In Joseon society, Buddhist monks and yangban officials usually had no contact and monks were assigned the lowest social rank, together with shamans, gisaengs and butchers. No monk was allowed to enter the walls of Seoul. It might well have been the first time that Jeong Yak-yong had talked at length with an educated, intelligent monk and he clearly found the encounter deeply significant. It is worth noting that both Hyejang and Cho-ui could compose formal poems in Classical Chinese as well as any yangban scholar.

Most significant of all for the history of tea, there is the poem sent to Hyejang by Jeong Yak-yong only a few days after that first meeting. In it, he explains that his digestion has been impaired by the poor food he has been eating; he has learned that tea grows on the slopes above the temple and he asks Hyejang to send him some freshly picked leaves. There is an often repeated claim among Korean tea experts that it was Hyejang who introduced Jeong Yak-yong to tea; recently, however, Professor Jeong Min of Hanyang University has argued convincingly that the opposite was the case. Certainly, the poem clearly implies that he already knows what to do with tea leaves once he has them, he does not
ask Hyejang to give him already dried tea and indeed it is clear from later texts that Hyejang knew nothing about tea except for what he learned from Jeong Yak-yong.

In the same year, Hyejang enabled our exile to move out of the tavern and for nearly a year he lived in Boeun Sanbang, a small hermitage at the nearby Goseong-sa temple, which was under Hyejang’s control. By this time, the exile had found several pupils among the young men of Gangjin and the following year one of them offered him a house belonging to his family. The site is now lost. Finally, in the spring of 1808 he was able to take up residence in a house belonging to a distant relative of his mother, on the slopes of a hill overlooking Gangjin and its bay. It was a simple house, with a thatched roof, and it was there that the exile spent the remaining ten years of his exile, until the autumn of 1818. This is the site now known as “Dasan Chodang.” It is only a few hundred yards along the hillside from Baekryon-sa and wild tea bushes grow on the slopes surrounding it, as well as camellias and bamboo.

The hill behind the house was known locally as Da-san (tea-mountain) and that was to become the name by which our exile is best known today, Dasan. Here he could teach students who lodged in a building close to his, forming a close-knit community, and he could write. And write was what he did most, for during his exile he is said to have written 500 volumes. This needs qualifying, since one “work” might fill nearly 50 volumes of the standard size, but he certainly wrote a vast quantity, mainly in order to set out clearly a fundamental reform program for governing the country correctly. During the years of exile he concentrated first on the Book of Changes (Yijing), writing in 1805 the Chuyeoksajeon. A reflection on the Book of Odes followed in 1809. He wrote on politics, ethics, economy, natural sciences, medicine and music. After his exile in 1819, Dasan published his most important works: on jurisprudence Heumheumsinseo (1819), on linguistics, Aeongakbi (1819), on diplomacy, Sadekoryesanbo (1820), on the art of governing, Mongminsimseo and on the administration, Gyeongsesiryeong (1822).

The most important moment from the tea-drinking perspective came in 1809, when a young monk who had been studying at Taheung-sa, Cho-ui by name, came asking him to be his teacher in Confucian classics and Taoism. The Venerable Cho-ui (1786-1866) was born on the 5th day of the 4th lunar month, 1786, in Singi Village, Samhyang District, Muan County in what is now South Jeolla Province. His family name was Jang, his original monk’s name was Ui-sun. In his sixteenth year he became a monk at Unheung-sa temple on the slopes of Deokyong-san in Naju.
County, South Jeolla Province, under the guidance of the Venerable Byeokbong Minseong. In 1805, after an enlightenment experience on Wolchul-san in Yeong’am, he received ordination from the famed Seon (Zen) master Wanho Yunu at the temple of Daedun-sa (now known as Daeheung-sa), when he was given the name Cho--ui. In addition to his learning in the Chinese classics, Cho--ui was a skilled painter in both scholarly and Buddhist styles, and a noted performer of Beompae (Buddhist ritual song and dance). In 1809, he spent several months in Gangjin, learning the Yi Jing (Book of Changes) and classical Chinese poetry from Dasan.

The scholar Geumryeong Bak Yeong-bo 錦舲 朴永輔 (1808-1872), who often met Cho-ui during his 1830 Seoul visit, wrote in a note to a poem about Cho-ui: “The Ven. Cho-ui was originally known as Uisun but he was given a new name by his master the Ven. Wanho, inspired by a poem by Li Po, “Song of the foreign monk of Mount Taibai” (太白胡僧歌序) : ‘Near the central peak of Great Snow Mountain lived a foreign monk, wearing clothes made of grass (Cho = grass ui = clothing). Once he was attacked by a fierce tiger but he laid it low with his staff...’.” Steven Owyoung notes about this:

In fact, ‘Song of the Foreign Monk of Mount Taibai’ was not written by Li Bo, but rather by his contemporary, the court poet Ceng Shen 岑參 (715-770). See Cao Yin 曹寅 (1658-1712) and Peng Dingqiu 彭定求 (1645-1719) et al. comps, Qüan Tangshi 全唐詩 (Complete Poetry of the Tang Dynasty, 1705), juan 卷 199/27.). Since the "complete" compilation of Tang poetry did not occur until the early eighteenth century, I imagine that Tang poems were collected among the literati, both Chinese and Korean, catch as catch can. The key to the misattribution of the source of cho-ui 艸衣 is likely intimately linked to the legend of Li Bo as a bon vivant who adopted the binome Taibo 太白 (the planet/"star" Venus) as his alternate name. Li Bo also used the mountain and star in his poems, thus furthering the close association of Li Bo the poet with the phrase Taibo and any Tang poem containing Taibo. In fact, Taibo, as explained, was a popular image among several Tang poets. When Wan-ho named Cho-ui or Bak Yeong-bo recounted the christening according to Cho-ui, the myth of Li Bo likely overwhelmed their collective knowledge of Chinese literature. Moreover, Li Bo was a much more attractive figure than the courtier Ceng Shen, a poet who submitted and
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succumbed to the attractions of the court. Needless to say, the palace, officialdom, and office were anathema to Li Bo and his carefree, Daoist, and drunken ways.

The two monks, Hyejang and Cho-ui, were both outstanding and unusual figures, a worthy match and dear companions for Dasan. In 1811, Hyejang suddenly fell ill and died, although he was not yet forty. This was a cruel loss for Dasan, who wrote an epitaph that survives on a stone stele standing at the entrance to Daeheung-sa, recording the gist of their first conversation in 1805. It was fortunate that in Cho-ui Dasan had found a similar depth of friendship. In the autumn of 1812, for example, they went as far as Weolchul-san together and each painted a painting there as well as competing together in composing poems, characteristic pastimes for Confucian gentlemen-scholars but not for Buddhist monks!

Dasan remained in exile in Gangjin until 1818, writing and teaching a group of fine young disciples. At last he was allowed to return to his family home near Seoul. He used “Yeoyudang” as his final pen-name, it was the name of the house where he lived quietly, near the Han River, until he died in the autumn of 1836, on his sixtieth wedding anniversary.

One of the most important records of the way Dasan made tea comes from a text written by him late in life. In 1830, already an old man, he wrote a letter to Yi Si-Heon (1803-1860), the youngest pupil he had taught during his 18 years of exile. It is a touching expression of his concern for the new generation and at the same time it shows that to the end he continued to drink tea, which now he could obtain only with great difficulty:

The last three years have passed in a flash. When I think of your filial affection, I wonder if I am not mad. I cannot excuse the way I have left you without news, only always vaguely thinking of you. I hope that all has gone well for you in the meanwhile? Now again a year for the State Examination has come and although I know you have no interest in acquiring glory, I expect you are intent on writing well. I wonder what you are studying? Now I am old, I have been very unwell. I have been so weak that I could not so much as leave the house. My mental powers are so exhausted, they hang by a mere thread. In such a state, how can I say I am still alive?

The tea and letter you sent previously finally arrived. Only now can I thank you. At the start of the year my digestive disorders
became so severe that I found the only thing capable of nourishing my feeble body was caked tea. Now we are approaching Gogu (April 20) so I hope that you will soon send some again. But the tea you sent last time yielded a coarse powder, which is not good. It is essential to steam the picked leaves three times and dry them three times, before grinding them very finely. Next that should be thoroughly mixed with water from a rocky spring and pounded like clay into a dense paste that is shaped into small cakes. Only then is it good to drink. I trust that you understand? Whereabouts will the exam be held? I shall surely go to Seoul if the exam is held there, and you will be able to give me the tea directly.

Our story must now leave Dasan and focus on Cho-ui. Once he was in his forties, Cho-ui withdrew to the lonely mountainside above Daedun-sa, in the far south-west region of Korea. In 1823 Cho-ui had built a hut there that he called Cho-am (Grass hermitage) and then in 1830 he built Ilji-am (One-branch hermitage) having built Do-am (Tao hermitage) on the same site the year before. He also called Ilji-am ‘Usa’ (芋社) and it had other names too. He lived there alone for the next forty years, practicing meditation in a manner he developed and wrote about, provoking a methodological dispute that lasted long after his death. The origin of the name ‘Ilji-am’ is in a poem by the Chinese monk known as Cold Mountain (HanShan) which Red Pine translates as follows:

琴書須自隨，Zither and books are up to you
祿位用何為。but wealth and power are useless
投輦從賢婦，Send back the carriage and heed the wise wife，
巾車有孝兒。the good son rides in a covered cart。

風吹曝麥地，Wind blows across a threshing floor
水溢沃魚池。water spills from a hatchery pool
常念鷦鷯鳥，Keep in mind the tailorbird
安身在一枝。at home on a single branch。

The name Ilji-am comes from the the last line, it means ‘Single-branch hermitage’ and suggests the idea of being satisfied with almost nothing, rejecting all worldly desires in favor of a very simple life-style.

In 1828, during a visit to Chilbul hermitage in Jiri Mountain,
Cho-ui transcribed a Ming dynasty (Chinese) encyclopedia text on tea. The *Zhang Poyüan Chalu* 張伯淵茶錄, written ca. 1595, is a late Ming Dynasty work on tea usually ascribed to Zhang Yüan 張源. It was inserted as section 14, *Caichalun* (採茶論 Picking Tea), in the *Zengpu Wan-pao ch‘üan-shu* (增補萬寶全書 The Supplemented Encyclopedia of a Myriad Wonders), compiled on imperial command in 1595 by the Ming scholar Mao Huan-wen 毛煥文. This was the source of the text which Cho-ui copied. Two years later, on his return to Ilji-am, he made clean copies of that text, producing the *ChaSinJeon* ( Chronicle of the Spirit of Tea) destined to serve as a simple guide to the basic principles involved in making, storing and drinking tea. Rather strangely, the Ming style tea described in the Chinese text is leaf-tea, and the text was not revised to refer to the caked variety of tea that Cho-ui had learned from Dasan.

It seems from various writings of Cho-ui that he only began to make tea around this time. The method he used was that which he must have learned from Dasan years before, that known as “caked tea” described in the letter just quoted. There are records showing that Dasan taught the monks at Borim-sa temple, not far from Gangjin, how to make caked tea using the leaves of the ancient tea bushes growing wild around the temple. Cho-ui’s tea was almost certainly inspired by the tea of Borim-sa and may even have been made there, at least initially. Unless Cho-ui planted some, there was almost certainly no tea growing in the hills around Daeheung-sa at that time.

In 1830 Cho-ui visited Seoul on business connected with the monument erected to commemorate his late master Wanho, bringing with him parcels of caked tea he had made at Borim-sa. These he presented to a number of famous scholars. It seems that the tea impressed and helped establish strong relationships with a number of these highly educated scholar-officials, several of whom had been to China. They became his friends and disciples, in what Professor Jeong Min has described as a “Cho-ui boom”. These included Haegoe Doin Hong Hyeon-Ju (1793-1865) the son-in-law of King Jeongjo, and his brother Yeoncheon Hong Seok-Ju (1774-1842); the son of Dasan, Unpo Jeong Hak-Yu (1786-1855); as well as the famous calligrapher Chusa Kim Jeong-Hui (1786-1856) with his brothers Sanchon Kim Myeong-Hui (1788-1857) and Geummi Kim Sang-Hui (1794-1861). It was most unusual for a Buddhist monk to be recognized as a poet and thinker in this way by members of the Confucian establishment. As a monk, Cho-ui was not allowed to enter the city walls of Seoul and had to receive visits from these scholars while living in
Cheongnyang temple outside the capital’s eastern gate or in a hermitage in the hills to the north, reading and writing poems with them.

One direct literary result of Cho-ui’s 1830 visit to Seoul was the poem NamChaByeongSeo (南茶序 Preface and Poem of Southern Tea) by Geumryeong Bak Yeong-bo (錦舲 朴永輔, 1808-1872). A young aristocrat, Bak writes that Cho-ui brought tea he had made to Seoul and gave some to the scholar Yi San-jung, who in turn gave some to him. He was so impressed that he wrote this poem and sent a copy to Cho-ui. This was the start of a lasting friendship and Cho-ui often visited his home near the Han River in Mapo, near Seoul. Bak Yeong-bo heard from Cho-ui that he had dreamed of a visit by the scholar Jaha Shin Wi just as he was about to move into Ilji-am. He told Shin Wi of that, and served him some of Cho-ui’s tea, while showing him his NamChaByeongSeo, and as a result Shin Wi composed his own Namchasi byeongseo (南茶詩序) in imitation.

Cho-ui then returned to his hermitage. In 1837 he composed the DongChaSong (Hymn in Praise of Korean Tea), at the request of Hong Hyeon-Ju. The text of the DongChaSong consists of a poem divided into 17 stanzas of varying lengths, and a series of notes by Cho-ui inserted after the relevant line. What might have been Cho-ui’s purpose in writing the DongChaSong? The title suggests a celebration of Korean tea, and certainly there are lines where he claims that Korean tea is as good as any produced in China. But a commentary in stanza 12 perhaps indicates a more satiric or pedantic purpose:

In Jiri Mountain’s Hwagae village, tea trees grow in profusion for forty or fifty ri over a wide area. I believe there to be no larger tea field in our country. Above Hwagae village lies the Jade Floating Terrace, and below it is Chilbul Meditation Hall. Those meditating there often picked tea late, old leaves and dried them in the sun. Using firewood, they cooked them over a brazier, like boiling vegetable soup. The brew was strong and turbid, reddish in color, the taste extremely bitter and astringent. As Jeong-So said: ‘Heaven’s good tea is often ruined by vulgar hands’. (DongChaSong stanza 12)

It is clear that he felt the art of making good tea was barely known anywhere in Korea, even among monks. The concluding lines of the DongChaSong contain a particularly resonant declaration that the state achieved by a Buddhist monk drinking a cup of tea alone in peaceful
The bright moon becomes my candle, my friend,  
a white cloud becomes my cushion, my screen.  
The sound of bamboo oars and wind in pine trees, solitary and refreshing,  
penetrates my weary bones, awakens my mind, so clear and cool.  
With no other guests but a white cloud and the bright moon,  
I am raised to a place far higher than any immortal.  
*(DongChaSong* stanza 17)

In 1838 we find him climbing to the topmost peak of the Diamond Mountains, Biro Peak, before visiting the hills around Seoul. In his fifty-fifth year, he received the title *Daegakdeunggyebojejonja Cho-ui DaeJongSa* (the Great Monk Cho-ui, Master of Supreme Enlightenment), from King Heonjong (r 1834 - 1849), a remarkable tribute at a time when monks were usually ignored or despised. In his fifty-eighth year he visited his childhood home and found his parents’ graves covered with weeds, a sight that saddened him; he marked it in a poem.

One scholar became a particularly close friend of Cho-ui. Chusa Kim Jeong-hui was born in 1786 into a *yangban* family well-known for producing many fine calligraphers. His family home is still visible near Onyang. His family was part of the Andong Kim clan, the Dowager Queen Kim was his great-aunt, so that from 1800 they enjoyed an important rise in status and position. For him, 1805 was a terrible year. His birth-mother had died not long before (he had been adopted by another member of the family who had no children). Soon after the death of the dowager queen, his wife died, then his former teacher, then his foster-mother. There are indications that these misfortunes reinforced his interest in Buddhism, while he rose in the social hierarchy and continued to do historical research.

Much later, from 1840 until 1848, Kim Jeong-Hui found himself in political disgrace, exiled to the southern island of Cheju. He visited Cho-ui in Ilji-am on his way there, and after his departure Cho-ui painted a ‘bon voyage’ painting which has survived. Before he left, Chusa wrote the name-board for a meditation hall in Daeheung-sa that Cho-ui had built, *Illo-hyangsil*, which means more or less “the fire for making tea smells good”. As an act of merit by which he hoped to hasten Chusa’s return from Jeju-do, Cho-ui constructed a hall at Daeheung-sa, the
DaeGwangMyeongJeon. A fire had recently destroyed much of the temple and there was a lot of rebuilding.

During the years that followed, Cho-ui visited Chusa in Jeju Island no less than five times, once staying for six months, bringing him tea and company. Tea did not grow in Jeju-do at the time. The house where they stayed, in which Chusa taught local boys the Confucian classics, remained standing until the Korean War and it has now been restored. When Chusa was freed, he visited Cho-ui at Ilji-am as soon as he arrived on the mainland on his way back to Seoul. From 1850-2 he was again exiled, this time to northern Korea. Court life in the Joseon period was clearly still extremely dangerous on account of the constant factional infighting. Kim Jeong-Hui died in the 10th month of 1856, and a little later, Cho-ui, already 71, visited his friend’s grave near Asan, to the southwest of Seoul. Cho-ui remained vigorous and healthy to the end, all the time practicing meditation. Early in the morning of the second day of the seventh month of 1866 he called his attendant to help him get up, sat in the lotus position and entered Nirvana.

Epilogue

Many of Dasan’s students during his Gangjin exile continued to live in their home town throughout their lives. Some of their descendants still remain in Gangjin and it is in their homes that major new texts about their relationship with Dasan, and about tea, have recently been discovered by Professor Jeong Min. Another continuity was provided by Yi Han-yeong (1868-1956), who continued to make and sell caked tea in Gangjin during the Japanese occupation (1910-1945) in a manner he always claimed to have inherited from the practice of Dasan and his students. He called his tea _Baekun-okpan-cha_. He was the only person known to have been producing and selling a specifically Korean form of tea during the Japanese colonial period. He was discovered and photographed in 1939 by the Japanese forestry worker Kazuo Ieiri. The first modern study of tea in Korea, 朝鮮の茶と禪 “The Tea and Zen of Chosen” by Morooka Tamotsu and Kazuo Ieiri, was published in Japan in 1940. This book later served as the first textbook for the Korean tea revival of the 1950s and 1960s, prior to Hyodang’s groundbreaking _Hangugui Chado_ of 1973.
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Brother Anthony is currently President of the RASKB. He drinks tea and translates modern Korean literature. He is emeritus professor at Sogang University and chair professor at Dankook University.
Recent Journeys in Korea: 1883-4

By William Richard Carles,
H.M. Vice-Consul, Korea.

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So much of the interest attaching to Korea is due to the ignorance of the country and its customs in which Europe has until quite recently remained, and to the incidents affecting those few occasions on which Westerns had been brought into contact with Koreans, that it seems desirable to refer briefly to her past history, so far as it has concerned other nations, before touching upon the present.

Of the Korean aboriginals scarcely anything is known, but there are historical records to prove that Korea was already inhabited in the twelfth century B.C., when Ki-Tze introduced from China the first elements of civilisation into the land. Both previous and subsequent to that date there had been occasional immigrations from Manchuria which have left a strong mark on the people of to-day. At the same time, though the facial characteristics of the people greatly resemble those of the Manchu, there is great variety of feature among them. Jews, Japanese, and Caucasians all seem to be represented, and that not in separate districts, but in almost every town of any size, so that foreigners on their first arrival in Korea are little troubled by the difficulty which is encountered in most other Oriental countries in distinguishing one native from another. Some faces are almost destitute of hair, like those of the Northern Chinese; others exult in rich silky whiskers and beard; others are almost hidden in a coarse tangle of hair. Among the gentry it is by no means uncommon to meet almost an English face, with round cheeks, small aquiline nose, well-cut mouth and chin. Even a bright blue eye is not unknown, and the hair is
by no means invariably of a pure black.

Though it is very evident that many stocks have been drawn upon to produce the Koreans of the present day, the seclusion in which the country has remained, except during periods of invasion by China or Japan, has been marvellous. Almost the first knowledge that Europe obtained of the country was through some Dutchmen, who in 1653 were shipwrecked on the coast, where they found their countryman Wetterree, who had already been a prisoner there for twenty-five years. After fourteen years of confinement some of them escaped to Japan and thence home to tell of their adventures.

They were not, however, absolutely the first Europeans to set foot in Korea, for the missionary G. de Cespedes had taken advantage of the Japanese invasion at the end of the sixteenth century to introduce Christianity into the land.

The seeds which he sowed were not utterly destroyed by persecution and a revival of Christianity took place in 1777, which was assisted by Chinese missionaries at different periods between then and 1835, when M. Maubant at last succeeded in entering the country, after attempts had been made for over forty years by different foreign missionaries of the Church of Rome. The footing which he gained was improved by his successors, in spite of repeated periods of persecution, until, in 1866, the only three who were left had to flee for their lives, after thousands of their converts had been put to death. How cruel the persecutions had been will appear from the fact that three out of five bishops, and nine out of sixteen missionaries, had been martyred, and the majority of those who had escaped martyrdom had succumbed under the trials that their life had entailed.

The fate of her missionaries provoked France the same summer to send an expedition to avenge their death; but the resistance which was offered led to the withdrawal of the force, and almost at the same time an American schooner which attempted, treaty or no treaty, to make an opening of trade, was burnt with her crew in the river below Phyong-yang. Once again, in 1871, an attempt was made, this time by the United States, to secure some security for shipwrecked crews in the future, as well as satisfaction for her murdered citizens; but again the resistance was such that no result was obtained, and Korea could again boast of having repulsed foreigners from her shores. In 1876 it fell to Japan to follow the examples of France and the United States; and as this time full means were taken to carry out the purpose, success attended the invaders, and at last treaty relations were established between a foreign country and Korea.
Of the half-religious, half-sacrilegious attempt which had intervened and been defeated, to the satisfaction of all foreigners except the missionary and adventurers concerned, I will not now speak; nor is it necessary to recall the events of the last few years, which have seen the Japanese Legation twice burnt to the ground, and in spite of these fits of anti-Japanese hostility, have led to treaties with the United States, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia, granting security for life and property to all foreigners in Korea.

The geography of the country is very simple. With a population of about 8,000,000 and an area of about 90,000 square miles, or very closely the same as that of Great Britain and Wales, Korea extends south from Manchuria in one large promontory, from the base formed by the rivers Amnok (Yalu) and Tuman. It is divided into eight provinces, or “Do” the names of which are taken from their two chief cities, e. g. Phyong-an is formed from the first syllables of Phyong-yang and An-ju; Chhung-chhong from Chhung-ju and Chhong-ju; Chol-la, by a euphonic change, from Chon-ju and Na-ju. Mountainous in the north, it is hilly in the south.

At the extreme north lies Paik-to-san, the great mountain on which are the sources of the two rivers which form the northern boundary. With it are connected many myths and legends regarding the prehistoric times of the country. From it extends a range of mountains running north and south, which generally follows the line of the eastern coast at no great distance from its waters. This conformation has had considerable effect upon the country. The more extended slopes of the west are comparatively favourable for agriculture, while the slip which lies between the Japan Sea and the mountains is not only narrow but cut off from communication with the west by the precipitous character of the mountains on their eastern face. In the south, where the range trends inland, and the conditions no longer remain the same, Kyong-sang is one of the richest provinces in the kingdom.

A circumstance which tells against the prosperity of the east is the absence of rivers of any importance, and the scarcity of islands and harbours to afford protection to shipping. The value of such harbours as do exist is out of all proportion to their trading facilities, in consequence of their remaining open throughout the winter; and it is to this fact, and to the contrary being the case on the Russian coast of the Pacific, and on the shores of the Yellow Sea, that the importance of Port Lazaref is due. The rise and fall of tide along this coast is very slight; at Gensan only two feet, but from the south to the west its force rapidly increases, and at Chemulpo attains to a rise and fall of 38 feet. Whether due to this cause or not, along
these shores are numberless islands, many of them so little detached from the mainland, as to have been frequently confused with it by navigators. The indistinctness of outline of the coast is further enhanced by the mud banks which extend far beyond the reach of sight out to sea. Their presence has sadly diminished the usefulness of the rivers for navigation. So greatly is this the case, that the native craft which come down the Nak-tong are said to have to tranship their cargo to other vessels for conveyance to Fusun, on account of the shallows at the mouth of the river; on the other hand, along the west coast, the great extent covered by the delta of the rivers, has to a large measure done away with the bars which might have been expected from the violence of the tide and the volume of the streams. The rapid rise and fall of the tide and the vast area which twice a day is left bare by the receding tides, are the causes of frequent fogs which often are driven inland.

Of the rivers, the Mok-pho, the Keum, the Han, and the Tai-dong, though all alike important, give way before the Am-nok, which is by far the grandest river of Korea. Flowing through lovely mountain scenery, it has so many affluents that in summer its waters rise full 40 feet, even where its width is a mile or more. In the time of its highest floods, the rafts of timber are launched which have been awaiting water-carriage in the mountains.

Lying mainly between the 35th and 40th parallels, the climate of Korea is greatly tempered during the summer by the sea breezes, which render outdoor exercise quite possible, even when the thermometer stands at 100°. Such rain as falls is almost confined to June-September, and during the rest of the year the sky is bright and clear. In the winter, the cold even at Soul is very severe, and the river Han, though 400 yards broad, is frozen for three months sufficiently hard to admit of cart traffic. The chief products of Korea are rice, wheat, beans, cotton, hemp, maize, millets, and tobacco. The cultivation of rice is facilitated by the water-supply of the numerous valleys, which are barred across by bank after bank of mud from the head of the valley down to the sea. Fond as the Koreans are of society, they never seem happier than when in the early summer, gangs of men stamp in the rice roots, keeping time and line with their leader. With feet high poised, they wait the next note of the chant, whose echoes will soon be sung back to them from the hills, or returned to them from other gangs working in the distance. Studiously decent, even at such work they do not lay aside their clothes; and women who help their husbands in planting and weeding the rice fields, are reproached by their betters for their impropriety in tucking up their trousers to the knee.
Field after field of rice between low-lying hills, which in winter are scratched bare of tree and grass, present a monotonous prospect, which, as I have heard it described in Chol-la Do, must be wearisome in the extreme; but in the northern provinces, with which I am familiar, there is never any lack of beauty, and in the spring there is an exquisite variety of flowers and grasses wherever the ground has been left untouched by the plough. Even in the more thickly populated neighbourhood of Soul, many groves of trees are spared out of respect for the tombs which they shelter, and the rounded outlines of hills of disintegrated granite are grandly broken by peaks of rock, which tower up, free from shrub or grass, 300 to 400 feet above their fellows.

Further north the character of the country gradually changes, until rice-fields are forgotten and give way to oats and potatoes, hemmed in between mountains whose sides are one dense thicket, except where clearings have been cut or burnt, and lack of terracing has brought down streams of detritus at the first summer storm. So wasteful has been the system of wood-cutting, that along the main routes it is only occasionally that glimpses are seen of the beautiful woods which lie back from the roads. Trees, brambles, and weeds, all give way before the pressing need of fuel in the winter, and the result would be dreary indeed if the dead did not protect their groves.

There is much in the general features of the country to remind the traveller of the north of Scotland. Of this great part is due to the geological formation, which is mainly of primary rocks. In Hwang-hai Do are mesozoic rocks, but granite and metamorphic rocks hold the larger part of the country for their own. On the road between Soul and Gensan are oval fields of lava, one of which I suppose to be 40 miles long, and lava and volcanic rocks are found in the north near Wi-won and Chhu-san. These fields of lava are generally surrounded for some distance on either side by conical peaks, showing that the area of disturbance must have been very wide. In Northern Korea it is seldom that the mountains open out wide enough to give an extended view, but from the centre of these lava-fields the panorama is very striking. Far away in the distance stretch range after range of mountains, while, for some miles round the spot on which one stands, the plain is so smooth and unbroken, that the eye is unable to tell in which direction the ground rises, though the slope over which the lava has flowed is in reality greater than that of a swift-flowing river. Where the lava-field meets the mountains a great chasm has been worn by the torrents. So deep are these encircling ravines, and so high is the table-land of lava, that the mountains seem to have been shorn of their
bases, or else to have dropped through 100 feet and more of the earth’s crust.

To describe a journey through Korea without first attempting to describe Soul would be vain, but the feat is no easy one. The city lies in a basin about three miles in diameter, the sides of which are cut down at the east and west, and rise 800 feet high to the north and south. Like Chinese cities, Soul has its battlemented walls of stone, and heavy gateways of woodwork and tile, studded with portholes, behind which cannon are supposed to be planted. But inside the walls the resemblance does not last. The first impression is that there are no houses, but only huts thatched with straw. From the broad main streets it is easy to look over the roofs of the whole city to the beautiful hills, clad with fir, which lie at its back and foot. Ten feet from the ground there is hardly an object to break the view, until the narrow tortuous lanes are entered, alongside which most of the better class of houses are built. They, too, are low, and from the outside show no sign of comfort, for the servants’ quarters are ranged along the lane, and the better buildings are hidden from view. Sometimes through an open doorway a glimpse is caught of a pavilion of unpainted wood, raised two or three feet from the ground, with windows and doors of trellis-work filled in with white paper. The eaves project far over the sides, and perhaps in the east is a little balcony running under their shelter. The courtyard is swept clean, and the neatness of the wood and paper is enhanced by the shining whiteness of the servants’ clothes. Men are standing in the doorway in robes which reach almost to the feet. On their heads are conical hats of bamboo, split into little shreds and woven together so fine as to give free current to wind or rain. Every man has in his hand or mouth a pipe with a stem 3 feet long, fit to serve as an Englishman’s walking-cane. On their feet are socks of cotton cloth and light straw sandals. Loose trousers, falling in a bag from hip to knee, are neatly bound round the ankle over the socks.

The quiet and cleanliness of this scene is widely at variance with what obtains in the streets. There bulls hidden under ponderous loads of brushwood block up the road; scores of tiny ponies canter along, with grinning urchins seated sideways on the empty packs; stalls of nuts, salt fish, turnips, chestnuts, brassware, pipes, pipe-stems, and all sorts of miscellaneous odds and ends, are planted at every corner and on either side of the road; and hundreds of foot passengers are making their way to and fro.

Hats of every kind and shape, except what one had previously conceived to be possible, are seen in every direction. There are black
conical hats woven of split bamboo or horsehair, sometimes with wings projecting in front of the ears; white conical hats of wickerwork; Japanese parasols, of which children are the sticks; basket hats coming down to the ears; hats of straw-matting reaching to the shoulders; felt hats with broad brim and round crown, surmounted by a tassel or a bunch of plush; four-sided brimless hats of pasteboard; and, strangest of all, on top of the high conical hats is popped a little bee-hive covering of oil-paper, to protect them from the rain.

The women, of whom few are seen during the daytime, wear no hats at all. Their head-covering is a green mantle drawn over the head, leaving only eyes and nose exposed; if they are slaves their heads are bare, or perhaps girt round with coils of hair inches thick, which make a fine stand for such things as they are carrying. Their petticoats are worn very full at the hip over baggy trousers, and this fashion and the manner in which the mantle is held with both hands under the chin, give them an ungainly gait, though when without their mantles they carry themselves well. Their jackets are very short, and, unless the petticoat is pulled up round their bodies, the breast is left bare, but their bearing is far modester than their dress.

It is only, however, of the poorer class of women that I am able to speak at all, for the others do not venture out until after nightfall when the men have to keep to their houses.

Spectre-like figures stalk through the streets in mourning robes of coarse hempen cloth gathered round the waist with a cord. A deep basket hat reaching to the shoulders, and a small screen of cloth held on two sticks before their mouth, completely secure them from recognition, and the dress was accordingly adopted by the Roman Catholic missionaries, to whom disguise was: absolutely necessary.

In striking contrast to their garb are the bright colours worn by the officials. Of the dresses worn by them, or their retainers, the gayest is of scarlet sleeves, yellow shoulder-pieces, and a bright blue body and skirt, but the court dress is comparatively sober, being generally of a dark puce colour, unrelieved by brighter colours. Sometimes a throat-lash of large red and yellow beads secures their hats. Of them some perched on high saddles clutch firmly to the peak, while their servants hold the reins and clear a way for their masters. Others are borne swiftly along the streets in covered chairs, so small as to render legs an inconvenience. Others are carried in arm-chairs over the backs of which are thrown tiger- or leopard-skins. Higher dignitaries still enjoy the privilege of riding on a monocycle, which is half carried, half pushed along the road.
While in the streets all is bustle and confusion, in most of the shops there is but little stir. The shopkeepers keep at the back of their premises, smoking a pipe while squatted on the ground, unless some particularly troublesome customer requires something which is out of their reach.

All visitors to Soul are greatly struck by the beautiful whiteness of the clothes in a city where drains are unknown, and the foul mass of decomposing matter lying on either side of the street is never cleared away except by a storm of rain, and then only to be carried to the streams, which flow through the town, and serve as washing grounds for the linen of the households.

Near the junction of the two main streets are shops of two stories, built of stone, behind which are little courtyards lined with tiny stalls like those in a street of old Cairo. Their occupants hold these buildings from the king, and in partial discharge of their duties to H.M., are bound to render onerous duties of attendance on the occasion of royal marriages, funerals, and the like. How onerous these duties are may be guessed from the fact that a royal funeral is regarded as almost as great a calamity to the whole country as a famine; from the heavy corvee imposed upon the nation.

The only buildings of any importance in the capital are the palaces, which are approached by wide streets leading to high gateways built in the Chinese style. The western palace is especially fortunate in the latter respect, as the street which leads to it is 700 yards long by 100 yards wide, and is flanked by the larger public offices. The main buildings in the interior are two large halls, built in the Chinese style, and a summer pavilion about 40 yards square, raised some 12 feet from the ground, on obelisks and pillars of stone, standing some 16 feet apart. A large pool of water at its side, planted with lotuses, feeds a moat, across which light bridges of marble are thrown. Numerous courtyards, shut in by walls, contain the private rooms of the king and his family while his suite and servants are quartered in buildings which flank the great squares in which the halls of state are situated. Among the ruins of a part of the palace, which was burnt down a few years since, stand a number of strange-looking chimneys which rise out of the ground uninjured and scarcely blackened. These owe their existence to the custom of building the chimney at some little distance from the house. The plan is rendered possible, as the heating of the rooms is effected by a chamber underneath the floor, at one side of which is the receptacle for fuel and on the other, either an orifice by which the smoke escapes, or a flue to conduct it.
through the courtyard to the chimney.

This is not the only peculiarity of Korean domestic architecture. Another is the division of a house into winter and summer rooms. The latter are at the ends of the building, and are raised above the ground on corner stones which permit the air to circulate freely beneath the wooden floor.

The interior arrangements are like those of a Japanese house; doors and windows consisting of a light wooden framework, strongly papered on either side, which slides easily in grooves. The windows, which also serve as doors, are generally double, the outer one consisting of two battants opening outwards, and fastened back against the wall during the daytime.

The woodwork of the houses is very curious. It is on it that the whole house depends; but though the weight of the roof is very great, owing to the nature of the tiles employed, nearly a third of the value of the massive beams which support it is destroyed by their ends being pared away to fit them into sockets cut on the top of the upright wooden pillars. The brick or stone work between the pillars serves only to fill in the interspaces, and bears hardly any of the weight of the roof, which is often put on before the walls are built.

Another peculiarity about the structure of the houses is that owing to the scarcity and high price of lime, the stones, of which the outer walls are built, are tied together with millet stalks, before the interstices are filled in with mud.

Of the mud cabins in which the poor people live, all that can be said in their praise, is that they are warm and generally have clean floors. The dimensions of the best rooms often do not exceed 8 feet by 6 feet, and the height is generally about 5 feet. The doors are 3 feet 8 inches by 22 inches, and the windows 2 feet by 18 inches. In such quarters as these I have often had to sleep with two companions, and we were blest, compared to the ordinary travellers, of whom I have seen seventeen sleeping in a room so small that heads and feet overlapped, and the floor was positively carpeted with bodies.

The longest journey that I made in Korea was in the autumn of 1884, when, starting from Soul, I followed the main road to China as far as Wi-ju, and thence continued along the north frontier to Wi-won. At Wi-won I left the Amnok-gang, whose valley had been pursued by the road so far, and crossed by Kang-ge over a high mountain range to Chang-jin. From Changjin the track followed the Sam-su river almost up to its source, and then by a sudden descent dropped into the level country near Ham-
heung, and so past Yong-heung to Gensan. From Gensan to Soul I took the ordinary route, which crosses the mountains at Ko-san, and continues almost due south past Boi-yang and Kim-hwa to the capital. The distance covered was about 1000 miles and the time occupied forty-three days.

The road from Soul to Wi-ju is that which has for centuries been taken by missions from and to Peking, and along its course the Koreans have fought many bloody battles against the invading armies of China and Japan. It is eminently the high road of commerce north of Soul, as every track to the west of the mountains converges on this line, and Kai-song, Phyong-yang, and Wi-ju are three of the most important cities in the country after Soul. It was therefore with eager expectation of discovering some opening for British trade that I undertook the journey, and the disappointment was very bitter.

From Soul to Kai-song the road passes across numerous valleys at the foot of low hills of disintegrated granite. These as a rule have been robbed by fuel seekers of all grass and undergrowth, and give a white or reddish background to the villages at their feet. On the hill-sides are numerous tombs, planted on greenswards, surrounded by a horse-shoe bank of earth and protected by groves of fir. Two or three roughly carved figures in stone and a rude gateway formed of a stone slab laid across two pillars are sometimes placed before the grave, but more usually the mound stands without any mark to identify it.

The Sam-keuk-san, or Three-horned Mountains, lie to the east, capped by sharp peaks of rock, on whose face is neither grass nor lichen. At their feet lies the hill-town, or city of refuge, guarded by priest-soldiers, whose wall is seen vainly attempting to reach the highest summit. Within its enclosure are granaries and temples, standing by the banks of streams, which flow through a beautiful park, whose glow of autumn maple is considered by Koreans to rival the spring beauties of the azalea-banks in the other hill-town which Soul possesses at Kwang-ju.

These hill-towns are found all over Korea, and are intended for the protection of the people of the cities in case of invasion or rebellion. Another relic of times of trouble remains in the beacons, which send their message every evening from all parts of the provinces to the capital, to certify that no enemy is off the coast and that all is quiet through the land.

A few miles beyond Pha-jun lies the Im-jingang, a river 300 to 400 yards wide and with 25 feet depth of water. It is, however, like many of the rivers on this coast, at present only navigable for a short distance, on account of sand-banks.

Chang-dan is the only place besides Pha-ju of any importance on
the road to Kai-song, but villages of thirty to forty cabins are passed every four or five miles, and numerous dwellings nestle in dells and sheltered ground at the foot of the hill. Hidden behind a fence of wattle, they have little that is picturesque about them except the great gourds, whose weight threatens to cave in the roof on which they rest.

Kai-song is a place of great importance, in Korea, not only on account of its past greatness as the capital of the last dynasty, but as the site at which the cultivated ginseng is grown and prepared for the market. Of this root about 100,000 lbs. are exported annually, and the fees and duties upon it, which constitute the main source of the Korean revenues, amount to about 450,000 dollars. Even with all the restrictions that are placed upon its cultivation it is estimated that little more than a fourth of the export is through legitimate channels. That smuggling should be carried on to a large extent is no marvel, seeing that the duties on each catty of prepared ginseng amount to over 12 dollars.

The ginseng gardens are chiefly in the valley to the south of Kai-song, and are protected by high fences against robbers. The plants, which require four years to arrive at maturity, are grown under screens to shelter them from the sun, and need constant attention and frequent transplanting.

The cultivated root commands, however, a far lower price than that of the wild plant, which grows in the Kang-ge mountains. So difficult is it to find this that the people credit it with magic properties, and assert that only men of a pure life can see it.

Much harm is undoubtedly done throughout Korea to honest labour by the rich rewards which await the lucky in other lines; and time which would be well spent in the fields is constantly wasted in the search for wild ginseng, deer horns, and gold dust.

The population of Kai-song is somewhat over 30,000, but its trade is insignificant, the chief native products consisting of coarse pottery, fine matting, and oil-paper. The crops are of rice, wheat, beans, maize, millet, cotton, sesamum, perilla, tobacco, chilies, cabbage, and potatoes.

Between Kai-song and Hwang-ju the geological formation is different to what I have seen elsewhere in Korea, embracing limestone, gravel, pudding-stone, and, as I fancied, occasional fields of loess. The land is more open and better suited for cultivation, and the woods that are left are more varied in character than is the case between Kai-song and Soul. It is also said to be one of the best shooting grounds for pheasants in Korea.

It is to the coast of this province (Hwang-hai Do) that great fleets of herring-boats cross over from China. The fishermen are allowed to dry
their catch on the shore, but no intercourse is permitted between them and the natives.

One of the most beautiful of the woods on this road lies on the descent towards Hwang-ju, from the hills behind Pongsan. Dark firs, mixed with oak and alder, are relieved by the bright tints of the maples, the crimson-leaved rhus (*R. semipinnata*), and the coral-coloured berries of euonymus. Delicate lime-trees and brown-tinted hornbeams are closely shrouded in veils of clematis, while silver-tinted bushes of elaeagnus and bunches of mistletoe increase the variety of foliage. Here and there are fine ash-trees, and most beautiful of all for its growth is the *Acanthopanax ricinifolia* which grows 40 feet high and spreads out its branches, apparently quite unhindered by the thick growth around it.

Hwang-ju, which stands 13 miles from the sea, is only important as the residence of the general in command of the troops of Hwang-hai Do. Like all Korean towns, it is beautifully situated. At its back, stands a hill which is partially wooded, and along the crest of which runs the city wall. At its foot is the river which flows close to one of the gates, and the official buildings are all collected on ground which overlooks the city and commands a view of the plain beyond.

From An-ju to Phyong-yang, the country was remarkable for the richness of its soil. Almost the whole length of the road (100 li) ran through a plain, marking probably the ancient mouth of the Tai-dong river. The villages were hidden in little hollows sheltered from the wind, and beyond the plain stretched what appeared to be a great amphitheatre of mountains embracing the cultivated land.

For about two miles, before reaching Phyong-yang the road was lined with *seun-tjeung-pi*, the slabs which are erected to officials by the people in recognition of their merits. These slabs were of stone or iron, and in many cases were housed-in. Groves of sophora lined the river, interspersed with gleditschia, whose long pods hung waiting for the day when some Ning-po man will teach Koreans how to make soap, and how to use it. It is to be hoped that the slab to his honour will not be the smallest on the road.

Of Phyong-yang it is difficult to speak briefly. It is by far the most interesting and perhaps the most beautifully situated town that I have seen in Korea. What Shakespeare is to Stratford, and King Alfred was to England, Ki-tze was to Korea and is to Phyong-yang. Though he lived 3000 years ago, his memory is fresh in the name or every part of the city. His grave is kept in good repair, his portrait hangs in a shrine dedicated to his memory, and the standard of land measurement which he introduced is
marked out by the same roads and dykes that he traced out.

If there are some who will question the genuineness of these relics they will at any rate not deny the events of more ancient history of which Phyong-yang has been the scene. Fierce have been the battles raged under its walls, and it might have remained in Japanese hands until this day, had not the god of war shown himself with his battalions and driven the foreigners away. A beautiful temple has lately been erected to his honour, here, as in other parts of the country; and the siege of the city is portrayed in frescoes, in a hall where hang the portraits of the generals of the allied Korean and Chinese forces.

The interest of the city has not died out in later years, for it was in sight of her walls that the Gen. Sherman was burnt with all on board, leaving their fate a mystery for many years.

Phyong-yang has a population of over 20,000, and is the only city which impressed me favourably regarding capabilities of trade. It is only 36 miles from the sea, to which it has access by the Tai-dong river.

The visit of the Gen. Sherman seems to settle the question of its navigability up to the city by light vessels; and higher up there are two streams by which produce can be brought down from a considerable area. Apart from the large bean and cotton trade of the province, some of which finds its way at present to Newchwang, there are gold washings at Keum-san, about 20 miles off, and rich iron ore close to the river banks at Kai-chhon. The city is the centre of a silk industry, which is said to be considerable, drawing upon Thai-chhon, Yong-pyon, and Song-chhon for its supplies. The cattle are very fine, and but little teaching is required to greatly improve the condition of the hides, of which the export at present is from Chemulpo, a port 170 miles off. Added to this, the people possess the spirit of trade, and are anxious for opportunities of foreign commerce.

Between Phyong-yang and An-ju, there is little to note, except that the increased width of the road denotes greater traffic, which continues as far north as Wi-ju.

An-ju owes its importance chiefly to its strong military position commanding the roads north and south and resting against a hill, of which the northern face would be difficult of attack. The Chhong-chhon-gang, which flows close to its walls, is a river of considerable width, but shallow except in summer floods. Enormous numbers of wild geese were feeding on the banks near its mouth.

As the road advances north from Phyong-yang, the width of the valleys decreases, and spur after spur of the hills has to be crossed or rounded. Evidence of a colder climate is seen in the more frequent cultivation of
hemp, and in millet and maize largely taking the place of rice. The country is perhaps even more picturesque than previously, except for a few miles north of Yong-chhon. Eo-san and Kwak-san are especially remarkable, and when the valley of the Amnok opens to the view, the scene is exceedingly lovely. Woods all ablaze with maple stretch to the left towards the sea; in front is a wide plain, traversed by an avenue of trees four miles long, leading to Wi-ju. The town is perched like a castle on a hill. At its base flows the grand current of the Amnok, and to north and east are mountains, which stand out in bold relief to the tameness of the foreground.

Wi-ju is said to have a population of about 30,000, and is the great depot of all goods sent by the overland route to China. Until recently, a large strip of territory intervened between the two countries, which was regarded as neutral ground, not to be occupied or cultivated by either Chinese or Korean. In 1875, this land, to which many settlers had found their way, was incorporated into Manchuria by China, and a regular system of government has been established in it. Even at the present day, however, the only points at which communication between the two countries is permitted, are Wi-ju on the west and Kyong-heung on the east. The trade that I found at Wi-ju was astonishingly disproportionate to what might be expected from such a state of things. On the river bank were 19 boats, the largest of which carried 10 piculs or half-a-ton; a string of salt fish was being carried away from the custom-house, and a few baskets of shrimps were on their way there. On the ferry boat were but three passengers, and the track on the opposite shore had not even been trodden hard. In spite of this state of things, and in spite of assurances to the contrary, I cannot help believing that the old system, under which trade between the two countries was only permitted at markets held three times a year, has not yet been entirely broken through, or that at any rate old habits are stronger than systems.

The river is not seen at its best near Wi-ju, as a little distance above the town it divides into three branches each about 250 yards wide. The boat traffic on it is entirely in the hands of the Chinese, who carry up supplies to colonists on the north bank of the river; but advantage is taken by the Koreans of the summer floods to float down enormous rafts of timber from the mountains east of Chhu-san. Of the volume of these floods, an idea could be formed from the drift caught in branches of trees 40 feet above the river, in parts where it was three quarters of a mile wide.

From Hwang-ju to Wi-ju the road runs at no great distance from the coast, though a view of the sea is only obtained by climbing some of
the higher hills in its neighbourhood, and the ridges crossed are all low, in no case exceeding 600 feet. But turning inland from Wi-ju, the country gradually becomes more mountainous. Stream after stream is followed by the road to its head or descended to its junction with the Amnok. The crest of the mountains is topped by a ledge of rocks, which generally runs along the whole length, and affords a pathway for hunters or game, but is too narrow for traffic. The steep faces of the hills admit of little cultivation, and where an attempt has been made, the detritus has quickly poured down and ruined the plots of better soil beneath. As no terracing has been done to prevent this waste, the streams sometimes have to force their way through 18 to 20 feet of moraine-like matter; and so full of stones is the ground that the bulls which draw the plough are attached to a yoke wide enough to allow the ploughman to see the dangers ahead.

The people seem to have been discouraged by their ill-success, and were extraordinarily listless, sitting smoking in their houses when their crops were waiting to be carried, and leaving a large share of the outdoor work to the women of the household. The streams abounded in small fish, for which bag traps were set, and fine fish were easily procured from the Amnok by net or line.

Occasionally the road ran along the bank of the Amnok through maple woods, where the undergrowth was almost impenetrable, but excepting at these places the scenery was rather monotonous, being generally confined to the valley of some affluent of the big river. Of the beauty of the Amnok it would be hard to say too much. Its width of half a mile and more, the extraordinary clearness of its waters, the absolute quiet, and the absence of life, except where a flock of ducks are playing on the water or a fleet of boats are working slowly up stream under the cliffs of a mountain on the opposite shore, make a picture that charms the traveller without fail.

The marches were long for a hilly country, and we were generally benighted, but the pony drivers seemed rather to enjoy what would else-where be a disaster, for the villagers were generally awaiting us with bundles of reeds, which they used as torches to guide us on our way until we reached the next relay. The blazing torches and the excitement of travel by their light cheered up men and beasts, and one dark night over 10 miles were covered in three hours, in spite of rocky ground and, of a 30 miles’ march by daylight.

Near Wi-won the road left the Amnok and struck across the hills to the Kang-ge river, which is one of its affluents. The ranges crossed up to this point had gradually increased in height, rising at the last ridge
before Wi-won to 1250 feet, but there was no perceptible difference in the level of the river, my aneroid showing 29' 70 at the place where the Wi-won river joined it. The country between Chhu-san and Wi-won shows considerable traces of volcanic action in tufa, &c., and opposite Wi-won is a hill greatly resembling a volcano, which I had not time to explore.

The last 10 miles before reaching Kang-ge were very bad travelling. For a long distance the road ran through boulders and over slippery ledges which sloped down to the river. The ponies found it almost impossible to keep their footing, and two or three slipped into the stream. The drivers were in despair over the difficulties of the road and gave way to tears. Rain fell heavily and the night closed in early, but the stolidity of my Chinese servants was proof against everything. Mounted on their rolls of bedding, they stuck to their ponies or fell in with them, and showed little discomposure. They certainly were excellent servants for a journey. One of them, it is true, was by nature almost a cripple, but he stuck to me gallantly, though he was at daggers drawn with his fellow, and became later on so home-sick as to refuse food for two days and to cause me serious uneasiness. Fortunately at Gensan he met some friends who comforted him with wine and oil and reconciled him to his food, but I fear that he subsequently succumbed to consumption brought on by exposure.

Two of my ponies had broken down before reaching Wi-ju, and at Wi-won one of the drivers became quite knocked up. It was impossible to leave him there and impossible to send him home, and a day’s rest and half a bottle of whisky were needed to set him on his legs again. None of us indeed were sorry to rest, for since leaving Wi-ju we had travelled nearly 235 miles in eight days, and that over hilly ground.

From Kang-ge (bar. 28’ 78) the ascent was very constant. Snow fell the whole of the first day out and hid the country almost completely from view, but the next morning was clear, and found us on the out-skirts of a virgin forest (bar. 27’ 47). The snow was knee-deep, and had not been trodden. Branches of trees, weighted with snow, barred the path. Trunks of trees lying across it frequently necessitated wading up a stream, and the cold became more and more intense as the day grew older. But nothing could rob the forest of its beauty. Birch, rowans, oaks, and maple were for some distance the commoner trees. Magnificent zelkovas were seen here and there out-topping all their comrades, but the finest seemed to have suffered greatly from the storms, and one monster, whose stem was 2 feet 6 inches in diameter 50 feet from the base, had fallen across the track, where it had been sawn in two, as too large to clear away. The forest was almost impenetrable from the number of dead trees lying on the ground,
and scores had been felled to form bridges over the streams, on which traps could be set by fur hunters. Nearer the crest of the mountain (bar. 24' 84) the woods were entirely of fir, which grew 130 to 150 feet high, with perfectly straight stems. As their branches were bent down to their sides with the heavy weight of snow upon them, they were quite unrecognisable, but from cones sent to Kew they have been determined to be the *Abies micro-sperma*.

Not a soul was met, and only one cottage seen on 20 miles of this road, but after leaving the woods on the east slope a few villages were found in the plateau near Chang-jin (bar. 26’ 77). The population a few years since was greater, as silver-mines were at that time worked there with success, but latterly the quality of the galena has fallen off, and the ore is now sold as lead to the mint in Soul.

From Chang-jin I followed the Sam-su river for three days, until I reached its source in the mountains above Ham-heung. A large part of the country was open, and looked well suited for pasture, but the people complained bitterly of their poverty, relying as they did entirely on their crops of hemp, oats, potatoes, turnips, and cabbage. The snow, which lay deep on the ground, had buried a large part of the harvest, and it was probable that nothing could be done in the fields before May. Such produce as was being moved was drawn on sledges, but few people were stirring, and in the winter, they said, they never left their houses, except to collect fuel or keep open the road. The houses were, however, generally more comfortable than in other parts of Korea, and many immigrants had been tempted by the cheapness of the absolute necessaries of life to try their luck there as colonists.

Bears, tigers, leopards, and deer were said to be numerous, but, strangely enough, wolves are unknown in Korea, though found to the north of the Amnok.

While crossing the plain, two or three gold washings were passed, at which a few hands had been employed during the summer, but the work seemed to have been of a fitful character.

The ascent to the crest of the ridge (bar. 26’ 10), overlooking Ham-heung, was very gradual, through woods of fir, laden with long streamers of lichen. The south face was very steep, and commanded a beautiful view of the plain between it and the sea, while to right and left stretched grand mountains which hemmed in the plains with an almost precipitous wall of rock. The descent was very rapid, falling from bar. 26’ 10 to bar. 28' 78 in less than three hours, and on the following day we reached Ham-heung (bar. 30’ 05).
The journey from sea to sea, or more correctly speaking from Wi-ju to Ham-heung, occupied sixteen days (Oct. 14-29), being in length about 410 miles. There is said to be another route from Wi-won east to Hui-ju and Tan-chhon, both of which are interesting on account of their minerals; but south of the line which I followed, the valleys generally run north to south, and thus oppose so many obstacles to anyone wishing to cross them, that there are said to be no other roads running east and west above the latitude of Phyong-yang.

After the rude villages of the mountains, Ham-heung with its 3000 houses had a most imposing appearance, approached as it is over a bridge nearly 400 yards long. It has, however, no trade of any importance, except in hempen cloth, which is of very good quality, furs, beans, and hides.

The mode of separation of the hemp fibre is, according to the description given to me, different to that obtaining in China. At the bottom of a large pit paved with stones, large stones are placed which are heated by a fire at the side. Bundles of hemp are pressed down on the stones and kept in position by stakes, the heads of which are above ground. On the hemp, piles of grass are thrown, and the grass is closely covered with earth, until the pit is air-tight. The stakes are then withdrawn and water is poured in through the holes left by them. The water falling on the stones produces a dense steam, which in about twenty-four hours leaves the hemp ready to be pulled to pieces.

The fringe of country west of the road from Ham-heung to Gensan, which lies between the mountains and the sea, is little over 30 miles in width at any part. A great portion of it is very flat, and much harm had been done by heavy rains. A large portion of the rice crop had been ruined and the people were looking forward to a famine before the winter had passed. The population is, however, not exclusively agricultural. Pottery works exist in several places; gold-washings of an extensive nature are carried on at Yong-heung and on a smaller scale at Chong-phyong; north of Yong-heung is a bed of graphite, of which the boxes of cart-wheels are made; and, as is the case throughout the Phyong-an and Ham-kyong provinces, a small quantity of silk is produced by the women.

Gensan, with its neat streets of Japanese houses, well-kept bridges and pier, is a most astonishing surprise in Korea. The surprise is increased by the distance of the town from the foreign settlement, and by the almost complete absence of shipping, facts which at first sight make its existence at all a matter of wonder. But its position at the entrance to Port Lazaref has encouraged hopes of trade from abroad, and the market
in the native town has a sufficient stock of grain, furs, and fish, coupled
with an export of gold-dust, to induce Japanese traders to settle there. So
far, however, only three or four Chinese had followed their examples, and
no Europeans had yet been attracted there, except the staff of custom
officers in the employ of the Korean Government.

On leaving Gensan, the first object of interest was the traces of
volcanic action in the rocks, and the existence of a field of lava 20 miles
long by 10 miles wide. On crossing the mountains near Ko-san other
fields of lava were found beyond Hoi-yang and Keum-song, and even as
far as Kim-hoa many of the stones in the brooks are of lava. The rivers
have cut their way over 100 feet deep through this mass, but the action of
the atmosphere upon its surface has been very slow and the greater part
of the plains have still too little soil upon them to permit of cultivation.

Of the extent of this volcanic field I became more fully aware in
the spring of 1885, when on a journey to Phyong-kang, I found two other
fields of lava. The first of these is in the Yon-chhon district, and is about
10 miles long by four miles wide. The second reached from the
neighbourhood of the town of Chhol-won to the extreme border of the
Phyong-kang district, and as far as I could calculate was 40 miles long by
about 10 miles wide.

In each case the features were the same; a large plain covered
with grass was surrounded by precipitous ravines, through which ran
rivers at the base of the mountains, to which at one time the lava
undoubtedly extended. In the centre of the Ko-san plain is a pool about
300 yards long, which is the only one that I have seen in Korea. As it was
situated on the highest part of the field, the question has since occurred to
me whether it might possibly have been the mouth of a crater.

Between Hoi-yang and Soul the road is very pretty, running
between high mountains, which are in high repute among the natives for
the gold-washings that are found in these streams. Many signs of
workings were seen even from the road, which, as the summer floods
wash away the banks that are thrown up by the gold-seekers, must all have
been of quite recent date.

The road from Gensan to Soul is important as one of the great
lines of commerce between the east and west coasts, but the traffic seems
to be confined to copper, galena, hides, fish, and tobacco from the east,
and foreign shirtings, watches, and miscellaneous foreign and native
articles from the west.

The number of travellers when I came by it was considerably
decreased by the disturbed state of the country near Hoi-yang and Ko-san.
Several parties were met who had been robbed of everything that they possessed, and no resistance had been made to the robbers, who were said to go about in parties of thirty, armed with matchlocks. Neither here, however, nor elsewhere, was I in any way molested, and the temper of the common people seemed very favourable, while the conduct of many of the officials had been most courteous and friendly.

My first journey in Korea was made in the early winter of 1883, at the time that a treaty between Great Britain and Korea was being negotiated by the late Sir Harry Parkes. In spite of the fact that our party of three had no right at the time, under treaty, to travel in the country, and that foreigners in foreign garb had hardly been seen in the interior, the greatest civility was shown us by officials and people alike.

The part of the Kyong-kwi and Kang-won provinces which we visited was said to be the richest in Korea for minerals and game, but proved disappointing in both respects. Later on I learnt that its reputation for game was not undeserved, and that it holds tigers, leopards, mountain antelopes, and several kinds of deer, while pheasants, bustard, geese, and swans are to be found in considerable numbers. But at the time we almost discredited the existence of big game, except in one place, where a woman had been carried out of her house by a tiger the same day that we arrived. It seemed impossible to believe that, at the same time, tigers could be so plentiful as to commit, as we were told, almost nightly raids on the pigs and dogs of the villages in which we slept, and that the villagers would be so apathetic as to disregard our offers of lavish rewards if we were shown big game. As to the hunters who were to find us tigers, after a time our only care was to secure ourselves from their matchlocks. But game existed, as I afterwards discovered for myself, and the real difficulty in the way of securing good shooting is the necessity of speaking Korean, and knowing the country intimately, so as to organise the hunt oneself, in such a manner as to suit fire-arms.

The manner in which big game are shot by Koreans requires great nerve in the sportsman, for the gorges are driven upwards by a large body of men, and the guns are stationed at the head of each defile, sometimes behind a rock, but more frequently behind a screen of brushwood, and the cover is so thick that neither the game nor they are aware of each other’s presence until scarcely thirty yards apart. A man told me, however, that he had shot over thirty tigers stone dead without receiving a scratch himself until the last occasion, when he had been considerably mauled, and his matchlock broken to pieces.

Curiously enough the same words, *pom* and *horang*, are used to
specify both tiger and leopard. The latter animal is said to be the more savage of the two when wounded. But it is the tiger which appears on the standards of the troops and in paintings as the emblem of valour, and the tiger’s skin is the more honourable as the insignia of office. Tiger’s bones too fetch the higher price as a specific for courage and strength. A Chinese gentleman in Soul bought the whole carcase of a tiger and ate its flesh for the same object, but I am not aware that the custom obtains generally in Korea. The tiger appears to be of the same species as the Manchurian, with longer hair than the Indian tiger, and measuring, it is said, sometimes 13 feet. The largest that I have measured was 11 feet 10 inches and the largest leopard 9 feet 6 inches.

By the hunters or paoshus themselves the danger of attacking the larger game is fully recognised, and a man who has not the pluck to pursue them will not hesitate to state the fact. The arms used are most inadequate, consisting of a matchlock lighted by a slow match from a cord which is wound round the arm, and the balls, of which there are three to a charge, are little larger than a pea and imperfectly rounded.

The prize which is most coveted by the hunters are the horns in velvet of the large deer. These in July and August are at their best for the market, when a good pair will sometimes fetch 50 to 60 dollars. I have never seen this species of deer myself; indeed, I think that the hunters were unwilling to put me on its track, but it is by no means rare on the higher mountains of Kang-won Do. The horns are about 3 feet long each, and the footprint is like that of a red-deer. Besides it there are a species of Axis (maculata?), a larger deer resembling the Pseudaxis mantchurica, the Hydropetes inermis (the common deer of the Shanghai plains), a musk deer, a kind of roe, and the mountain antelope.

The fauna of Korea is undoubtedly very considerable, and besides tigers, leopards, bears, includes pigs, tiger-cats, badgers, foxes, beavers, otters, and several species of martens, among which is a sable, whose skin is of small value.

The number of birds is very large, as the position of Korea attracts many migratory birds to make it a stopping-place on their travels. Eagles, among which is a large black kind, are very numerous, even in the neighbourhood of Soul. Buzzards, harriers, peregrines (largely used by the natives for hawking), sparrow-hawks, kestrels, and falcons are among the commonest of the Raptores. Swans, geese, mallard and mandarin duck, common and spectacled teal, afford very good shooting in the winter. Bustards are by no means rare, but very difficult to get near. Imperial cranes, ibis, herons, and egrets are common in the rice-fields. Curlew,
godwits, redshanks, double, single and solitary snipe, and woodcocks seem to breed in the country. The large halcyon kingfisher is little rarer than the brighter kinds. Woodpeckers are numerous. Among them is a large black species with a red spot on its head and white marks on its body and wings, which may perhaps be the same as the *Troponax richardi* of recent discovery. Of the smaller birds I am quite unable to speak, except as to the number and variety which pass through Soul in April.

But to return to my journey. Though a few towns such as Hoi- yang, Kim-hwa, and Keum-song, are marked on the map as existing on this route, they are little more than the residences of the local authorities and places at which travellers can stop for the night. The valleys are so narrow as to admit of little cultivation, and fear of wild beasts prevents farmers from occupying land in the mountains, whose recesses are only known to the miners. Their work is frequently seen in gold washings, and galena and copper mines are found in several places. The largest gold-washings in the district are to the west of Phyong-kang, where about 500 men were at work last spring, but there, as elsewhere, the reports were not very encouraging.

Though this is the district in which most mines are to be found within a limited area, they are also scattered over most of the provinces. By far the richest copper-mines of Korea are said to be in the Kap-san district, but the production of copper is insufficient for the needs of the country, which imports copper and spelter in large quantities. So small is the out-turn of silver, of which Chang-jin was one of the most famous centres, that almost all the “shoes” on the Soul market bear the stamp of Manchuria or Shan-tung. The richest gold-mines that are worked at present are in the Yong-heung district, but so small is their out-turn that Gen-san, which lies quite close to it, only exported 80,000 dollars’ worth in the first ten months of 1884. The greater part of the gold which is exported finds its way to Japan; the mint at Osaka received in 1882-3 over 13,000 oz., and in 1883-4, 21,630 oz. of dust, the average fineness of which was 788.2 per mil. Of the gold received at the mint, a portion consists of ornaments sent there to be melted down, but gold ornaments are very little in use, except as clasps for the cap or filigree vinaigrettes.

Of iron there are traces in many places, but the best mines are probably at Tan-chhon in Ham-kyong Do, and on the banks of the Tai-dong river above Phyong-yang.

It is, however, early to speak of the mineral wealth of Korea, and as the part between Soul and Gensan lies close to an area of volcanic disturbance of vast extent, and has apparently itself been affected by it, it
is not impossible that it may be rich in ores. Of its beauty there can be no doubt, and though I have never visited Keum-gang-san, the mountains to which Koreans award the palm of loveliness, the country near it, seen even in its winter garb, was only rivalled by parts of the woodlands bordering the Amnok-gang.

Travelling in these mountains is far from luxurious, but its hardships are not unaccompanied by retrieving merits, and seldom have I seen a quainter sight than the yard of a farm at night. The sheds in which our animals drank up their mess of beans and hot water, ran round three sides of a square, in the centre of which blazed a bright fire to scare wild beasts and robbers. Round the fire sat some half-dozen Koreans, totally regardless of the intense cold, chattering and smoking, and occasionally replenishing the flames with a pile of reeds or brushwood which sent up a blaze of light the moment it was kindled. Squatted as they were on a manure heap, they seemed, with the bright stars above them, to be more favoured than we in our low kennel, poisoned with cakes of salted beans which hung from every rafter. Now and again the silence was broken by the screams of a fractious stallion, biting and kicking his neighbours, who in their turn plunged and squealed, until blows had brought them into order. How such nights of sleeplessness and riot brought any refreshment to man or beast seemed a marvel, but in the morning there was no sign of fatigue, except in those unfortunate persons who had slept in the foul atmosphere of the heated hovels.

Considerable care was taken of the ponies by their drivers. As soon as the packs had been removed, the animals were rubbed down, and after they had been cleaned, a thick blanket of straw was tied close to their bodies. Sometimes when the stable was very crowded, or the ground very deep in mud, a rope was passed from over the rafters underneath the belly in such a way as to take part of the weight of the body off the legs, and the care that was given to the cooking of their beans almost equalled that bestowed on their master’s dinners. The latter point struck me greatly, as the manner in which the food was served up for the men was far superior to that seen among the same class even in Europe.

Before closing this paper it seems necessary to advert to the religion, trade, and some of the other main characteristics of the country.

In spite of the great admiration which Korea has always professed for Chinese institutions, and to her adoption of competitive examinations for the selection of officials, caste has a great hold in the land. The distinctions between the nobles and the middle and lower classes are very wide. No office of even local importance can be held except by
nobles, and in the higher posts in the capital it is the exception to find a man of even the second grade of nobility. Trade or industry disqualifies nobles and their descendants for the privileges of their rank, and fear of this degradation not unfrequently produces the most absolute poverty without any possibility of relief, except in the chance of obtaining office. As its conferment generally goes by favour, and empty purses are the worst recommendations for office, the condition of these men, who prefer to starve rather than place their children in an inferior position to that of which they themselves have been born, is pitiable in the extreme.

The middle class is comparatively small, and consists of doctors, painters, interpreters, scribes, and the lower officials.

The lower class includes all who are engaged in manual labour of any kind, while far below all others are the butchers and tanners. As this class possesses no privileges, it is upon it that falls almost the whole cost of the administration of the country.

Religion as a stimulating influence seems to have no existence in Korea. Of superstitious observances there are many, mostly the outgrowth of Taoism. Shrines to the spirits of the mountains, with cairns to which stones are added by passers-by, stand at the top of almost every ridge crossed by the mountain paths; trees and bushes often have their branches laden with cotton streamers; stones or fossils of unusual shape are placed in the shrines; and where hollows have been worn by the weather in sloping rocks by the roadside, every little cavity is frequently occupied by a stone placed there by suppliants for a fair journey; grotesquely carved wooden figures, called syou-sal-maki, are erected at the entrances to villages to ward off evil spirits; and Taoist priests offer prayers, for a consideration, on behalf of wayfarers, to the spirit of the mountain by which their road lies.

The philosophy of the country is Confucian, and great restrictions have been placed upon Buddhism; but in spite of all penalties imposed, its followers are very numerous, and on crossing over the hills, away from the main road, it is a common thing to come upon Buddhist temples hidden away in a ravine, with perhaps a large figure of Buddha carved in the natural rock overlooking the temple.

Evidence of some other religion exists in the miriok, which are half-length human figures carved in stone. The largest of these is at Un-jin, near the Keum river, in Chol-la Do. From a photograph taken by Lieut. G. C. Foulk U.S.N., the body and head of the figure, which is estimated to stand 62 feet high, appear to be drawn on the model of the idols in Buddhist temples, but the cap is quite different. A column about 10 feet
high runs up from the head, and supports an oblong slab of about the same length. On this stands a smaller column supporting another slab. From the corners of the two slabs bells are pendent by chains.

The largest mirioks that I have seen are between Ko-yang and Pha-ju. They are about 25 feet high, cut out of some large boulders in the heart of a fir-wood on a hill-side. One has a round, the other a square hat, showing, according to Mr. Aston, that “the former is meant to represent Heaven, or the male element of Chinese philosophy; the latter Earth, or the female element.”

The trade of the country is at present insignificant. In 1882 the total of imports and exports amounted only to 3,467,325 Japanese yen, the principal exports being beans, peas, hides, and cotton-cloth. The best of their manufactures are paper (which of its kind is superior to that of Japan or China), mats woven of grass, split bamboo-blinds, and oil-paper. The wealth of the country from a Chinese point of view lies in its drugs, which are valueless in a European market. Many causes have combined to hinder the development of the country. Among these may be reckoned ignorance, insecurity of property for the poor and consequent lack of inducement to work, caste prejudices against working up leather or utilising skins of beasts for dress, and a preference generally for agricultural life to that of an artisan or manufacturer. To these have to be added a debased coinage, so cumbrous that a pony cannot carry more than 10l. worth, and in addition a multiplicity of guilds and corporations, which exist on a subdivision of trade which is quite ruinous to the country at large.

The domestic animals in Korea are very few. Its cattle are excellent; the ponies are very small, seldom exceeding 12 hands, but hardy and well-bred; the fowls are good; but goats are rare, sheep, tame ducks, and geese almost unknown, and the pigs smaller and worse than I have ever heard of.

Before the paper
The CHAIRMAN in introducing Mr. Carles, said that the writer of the paper after passing a competitive examination and receiving an honorary certificate, went out to China when he (Sir R. Alcock) was Her Majesty’s Minister there, and he had fully justified his early promise. He was now Vice-Consul in Korea, where he had lived for fifteen months. Those who were not experts in geography simply knew of Korea as a peninsula to the north of China from which Western nations had been more carefully excluded than even from Japan. Absolutely nothing was formerly known of the people or their customs, or of the physical geography of the country.
Mr. Carles, however, had had the enviable opportunity of being a resident there for a sufficient time to be able to give a clear account of the customs of the Koreans. It was only during the past very few years that it had been possible to make any treaty with them, all the previous attempts to approach their coasts having proved fatal. One American vessel which adventurously penetrated into one of the rivers was burnt with all the crew. The French missionaries had obtained a good many converts, but the persecutions were so furious that most of those who passed the frontier never came out again. Even of late years persecutions had raged, and it was said that 3000 converts had been massacred. That was a sign that the missionaries had made some impression upon the people, though no one could live in safety who attempted to lead the people to Christianity. The Americans, the British, the French, and the Russians now had treaties with them.

After the paper
Mr. M. BEAZELEY, C.E., said he had never been in Korea though he had lived for ten years in China. In 1883 he had the pleasure of crossing the Pacific from Yokohama to San Francisco with the Korean ambassador to Washington, who formed the first Embassy that had ever left Korea. Through their Chinese interpreter he learned a good deal about Korea. He particularly inquired about the mineral resources of the country, but he was assured that there would be very little return to any foreign Power that attempted to open up the country. Very good tobacco was grown there as well as silk, but the principal wealth for export was timber. He also learned that backgammon was a Korean game. The board is divided and arranged exactly like ours. The men are placed in the same order, and the moves are identically the same; the only difference being a single move for doublets instead of a double move as with us. It is very singular that this game should exist in Korea, as it is unknown in both China and (he believed) in Japan. He had mentioned the pleasure he felt in crossing the Pacific with the Ambassadors, and it certainly had never been his good fortune to meet with more agreeable and intelligent travelling companions than these Korean gentlemen.

Mr. FORBES said that as Korea had been shown to be a poor country, the only interest attaching to it was in connection with its strategical position. As an American he congratulated Great Britain on having secured Port Hamilton.

The CHAIRMAN said he once met with a French officer in China who had a strong opinion that Korea was rich in minerals,
especially gold, but there could be no doubt that it was a very poor country. There was one feature in connection with the Koreans which entitled them to respect. They had shown a very courageous spirit of independence, and had resisted the attacks of both China and Japan. At one time the latter country conquered nearly the whole of Korea, yet the Koreans had managed to maintain their independence. Miss Edgeworth had said that in social relations the great matchmaker was propinquity, but propinquity did not always lead to alliances or friendships in the case of nations. Powerful nations like China and Russia were now seeking alliance with Korea, but no one could say whether the match would be a happy one or not. The chief interest in Korea seemed to arise from her position at the entrance of the China Seas, which would make her of inestimable value to more than one European nation. Physical geography had much to do with the policy of governments, and people were apt to forget that there was perhaps a sort of necessity for some nations to spread out in one direction more than another. During five or six months of the year all the ports of Russia were ice-bound, all her commerce was stopped, and her fleet sealed up. The result was that she was driven southward, to the Bosphorus, to the Persian Gulf, and towards Japan or Korea, where the harbours were not frozen in winter. Any European Power having possession of such a harbour in Korea would be a menace to Japan and Pekin, and would have the command of the Pacific trade to America, and in the China Seas. There was not much promise of trade in the country itself, but it was impossible to say what might be developed if a friendly footing were secured with the Koreans, and commerce and agriculture encouraged. It appeared from what Mr. Carles had said that the people were disposed to trade, so that there was no need to despair of Korea becoming a valuable market for European commerce. He thought they were all very much indebted to Mr. Carles for his valuable paper, and moved a vote of thanks, which was cordially responded to by the meeting
The Life of William Richard Carles

Brother Anthony of Taizé

W. R. Carles’s book *Life in Corea*, published in 1888, is one of the very first books about the country based entirely on personal experience. Yet no account of his life seems ever to have been published. What follows is based on records and materials available through the Internet.

William Richard Carles (1848 – 1929) was the second son of the Rev. Charles Edward Carles, B.A., Vicar of the parish of Haselor, Warwick, and Georgiana Baker, his wife. His father had studied at Catherine Hall, Cambridge. His elder brother, Charles Wyndham Carles (1842-1914. M.A. Lincoln College, Oxon) was born on 29th December, 1842. William Richard Carles was born in Warwick on June 1, 1848. Both brothers were educated at Marlborough College, where they played cricket. William Richard entered the Consular Service in 1867, when he was sent as a student interpreter to China. He served in various parts of China from 1867 to 1901. He reports that his first journey in Korea was made in the early winter of 1883, at the time that a treaty between Great Britain and Korea was being negotiated by Sir Harry Parkes. He was appointed “provisionally” British Vice-Consul for Corea on March 17, 1884, at the same time as William George Aston (1841-1911), then Consul at Nagasaki, was appointed to be “provisionally” Her Majesty's Consul-General for Corea (*The London Gazette*, March 25, 1884, p. 1404). Both served there in 1884 and, in Carles’s case, into 1885 and were the first European representatives to reside for any length of time in Korea. Carles was perhaps chosen for the position on account of his knowledge of Chinese.

Aston was born in Londonderry, educated at Queen’s College, Belfast, and had been in Japan since 1864, arriving there first as a student interpreter. He had been studying Korean since the mid-1870s and was fluent in both Japanese and Korean. He had accompanied Vice-Admiral Willes in 1882 as interpreter during his visit to Korea, when Willes drew
up a treaty based on the American treaty with Korea, and signed it on behalf of the British government, but this treaty was later repudiated by the British government. Aston, with others, had to make repeated visits to Korea in 1883 to negotiate a new treaty, which Aston and Sir Harry Parkes, the British Minister to China, drafted. This new treaty, the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between Her Majesty [Queen Victoria] and His Majesty the King of Korea, was signed at Seoul on 26 November 1883, and marks the beginning of Anglo-Korean relations. It was Aston who in May 1884 secured the land on which the British legation / embassy now stands. On December 4, 1884, Aston attended the dinner held to celebrate the opening of the Korean Post Office, during which a group of pro-Japanese reformists staged the Gapsin coup, killing and wounding many of the pro-Chinese conservative ministers present. Aston and his colleagues were taken through icy streets to the safety of the American legation. Aston fell sick and was obliged to leave Korea for good early in 1885.

Carles says in his Life in Corea that in all he spent some 18 months in the country. The first part of the book, chapters 1-4, describe his first visit late in 1883. This was a private visit, on the invitation of a Mr. Paterson, a partner in the firm of Messrs Jardine, Matheson & Co.. It happened to coincide with the visit by Sir Harry Parkes to Korea to negotiate the new treaty. Carles accompanied two other Englishmen, Paterson and Morrison, and a Dane, the rest of the group being composed of Chinese servants, 3 ponies and several dogs. They arrived at Chemulpo from Shanghai on November 9, 1883. After a few days in “Soul” (the way Carles always spells Seoul), on November 16 they set out to explore the mining areas immediately to the north and east in already freezing weather. After returning they spent a few more days in Seoul, then they went to Chemulpo to return to Shanghai but their boat had left. They were obliged to take another boat to Busan, then on to Shanghai, where they arrived on Christmas Eve, 1883.

After being appointed Vice-Consul in April 1884, Carles returned to Korea at the end of April and attended the ceremony in the palace on May 1, 1884, when Sir Harry Parkes presented a letter from Queen Victoria to the King. After the conclusion of the ceremonies, Carles took up residence as Vice-Consul in Chemulpo, which was still a very small settlement with no adequate buildings and little to do. He made occasional visits to Seoul, endured a dreadful summer, then early in September he was ordered by London to make a survey of the so-far unexplored northern regions, to see if there were business prospects for Britain in that
direction. They set off on September 27 and returned to Seoul on November 8. On his return, Carles was ordered to take up the position of Vice-Consul in “Fusan” (as it was then known). He therefore sent his furniture down to Fusan and left for a short visit to Shanghai. He had not returned when the Gapsin Coup erupted on December 4. Carles seems to have returned quickly to Seoul, where he took the place of Aston, who had returned to Japan sick soon after the coup. Carles was present at and describes events in Seoul during the spring of 1885, and lists the gifts of food he received from the King. He does not say when he left Korea. We know he was in London in January 1886, when he presented his paper about Korea to the Royal Geographical Society.

In July 1886, Carles was appointed Vice-Consul at Shanghai (The London Gazette, July 13, 1886, p. 3396). He cannot have left at once, though, since he and Helen Maude James were married in Devon in September 1886. He was appointed Consul at Chinkiang (Zhenjiang) in July, 1889 (The London Gazette, July 19, 1889, p. 3895). His wife is recorded as having given birth to a son at Shanghai in 1890 (North China Herald, February 14, 1890, page 1.) but the newspaper records no name and nothing more is known of him. Another son, Alan James, was born on 1 February, 1894, in Chinkiang.

In September, 1897, Carles was appointed Consul at Swatow (The London Gazette, November 15, 1897, p. 6077). In May, 1899, he was made Consul at Tientsin (The London Gazette, June 20, 1899, p. 8866) and was promoted to Consul-General there in June, 1900 (The London Gazette, August 14, 1900, p. 5032). During the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, he acted as go-between for the besieged legation in Pekin. In January, 1901, he was made a Companion of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George and he seems to have retired back to England soon after. Apart from a paper on the history of Shanghai he presented to the China Society in London in May 1916, there is no online record of any activity by him for the rest of his life.

During the time he spent in Korea, Carles made several trips to explore the interior of the country. He published reports about them in various places, including at least one Government Paper, the paper given to and published by the Geographical Society of London in 1886, and in The Field, before publishing his Life in Corea in 1888. The book was republished in 1894. Apart from the monumental Choson: The Land of the Morning Calm by the American Perceval Lowell dated 1886, it is the first book-length account of Korea published on the basis of an extended period of residence in the country. William Elliot Griffis had published his
Corea, *The Hermit Nation* in 1882 without once setting foot in the country. Carles’ book includes photos taken by Lieut. G. C. Foulk U.S.N., “who was in charge of the united States Legation in Soul while I was there in the early part of 1885.” Foulk made a heroic journey through the southern regions of Korea in the autumn of 1884, but his account of it was not published until 2008.

Carles was a keen botanist and he sent plants which he collected to the Royal Botanic Garden in England. In addition to Korea, he collected plants and sent them back to Britain from China (1877-98: Fukien; Hopeh; Kiangsu); India (1884-91 ); and Japan (1892-96). His name was given (unbeknown to himself) to the wonderfully fragrant Korean Spicebush Viburnum (*Viburnum carlesii*) by William Botting Hemsley, Director of Kew Gardens. He became a Fellow of the Linnaean Society of London in 1898. A set of his plants from Korea, Kiangsu, and Fokien is in the Kew Herbarium.

William Richard Carles and his wife Helen Maude James were residing at “Silwood”, The Park, Cheltenham (Gloucester) at the 1911 Census, together with a daughter, Helen Mary, aged 23, born in China, and 3 sons, Richard Eric (aged 18, born in Berkshire), John Robin (aged 11, born in China) and Henley William (aged 8, born in Dorset). Their son Alan James (aged 17, born in 1894 in China) was serving as a naval cadet at the time. Mrs. Carles’s brother, John Ernest James, a retired school-master, was living with them, as were four servants and a “hospital nurse.” Charles Wyndham Carles, William Richard’s older brother, also a retired school-master, is recorded as being present as a visitor in a nearby house (“The Woodlands” The Park, Cheltenham) on the day of the census. Perhaps he had come on a visit and there was no room for him in his brother’s house? He was headmaster of Cothill School, Marcham, Berkshire at the time of the 1891 census.

A few years later, during the war, Lt Alan James Carles, Royal Navy, was killed (missing in action) when HM Submarine E22 was sunk on 25th April 1916, in the North Sea off Harwich. Acting Captain Richard Eric Carles of the Bedfordshire Regiment was awarded the Military Medal “for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty” (*Supplement to The London Gazette*, 22 June, 1918), the location is not specified. He died on 14 December 1924, aged only 32.

William Richard Carles died in June, 1929, in Bradfield, Berkshire. His wife lived on until 26 November, 1953, when she died in Reading, Berkshire.
Publications

*Foreign Office Report Of a Journey by Mr Carles in The North of Corea.* HMSO. 1885


*Life in Corea* (London ; New York : Macmillan and Co. 1888, 1894)
Online at: http://archive.org/details/cu31924023275641

"The Yangtse Chiang", *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Sep., 1898), pp. 225–240; Published by: Blackwell Publishing on behalf of The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers)

Online at: http://archive.org/details/cu31924023217809


Peter Korniki’s account of Aston’s life and activities:
http://www.ames.cam.ac.uk/deas/korean/aston-and-korea.html
The Life of William Richard Carles
I want to thank the officers and the members of our Council for their enthusiastic help during the past year. The Council currently has twenty members. It is responsible for all the activities of our Society. It meets once a month, with committees looking after each aspect of our different activities.

To begin with financial matters, we ended the year 2011 with an overall deficit and were obliged to draw on our limited reserves. The RAS has certain inevitable monthly expenses: it rents an office and a book storage space. In addition it has until now been employing a full-time General Manager and a part-time assistant. We were very glad to welcome Ms. Eunji Mah as that assistant in the last half of the year. At the end of 2011, Ms. Bae Sue Ja retired and in the time to come she will not be replaced, we will only employ Ms. Mah as part-time secretary. I want to express once again our gratitude to Sue for her 45 years of loyal service. She has organized and led over 2,000 tours for us. She will continue to help out as our Honorary Manager but I know she is looking forward to having some free time. We are immensely grateful to the management of Somerset Palace for allowing us to use this Lounge for our lectures free of charge.

Our income comes from membership dues, from a small profit margin on excursions, and from the sale of the books we have published over the years. In recent years this has not been sufficient and we have only survived thanks to some limited corporate sponsorship and generous private donations from a few Council members. We are trying to find
solutions that will ensure financial stability and the year 2012 will be decisive in this. Above all, we need to increase the number of paid-up members. In the 1980s we had nearly 2,000 members but now we have only a small fraction of that.

2011 has seen the full computerisation of our membership records, allowing us to see at a glance whose membership is about to expire and send out renewal notices. The annual subscription was increased at the start of 2011 from KW 50,000 to 70,000 for a year’s individual domestic membership (30,000 for students, 100,000 for couples, $25 for overseas members). In return, members attend lectures free of charge, are entitled to a discount on excursions and book purchases, receive a free copy of our annual journal Transactions, and are invited to the annual garden party. Feeling that this might not be enough, we have been looking for additional benefits to offer our members and have recently begun to organize some special study groups, open only to paid-up members. We are open to new suggestions and proposals.

We have started to send out regular email Newsletters announcing upcoming lectures and tours, instead of mailing out printed notices. This costs us nothing and we are happy to include interested non-members in the mailing list. Our home page is being well maintained and we are hoping very soon to have a Paypal account, which will make it much easier for people to send us money.

Our Library is housed in rooms belonging to Inje University in central Seoul and Professor Michael Welles has been working to update the catalogue. We have received several generous donations of books about Korea and always welcome more.

In May 2011, the Academy of Korean Studies published a book containing a selection of the most interesting papers from early volumes of Transactions with the title Discovering Korea at the Start of the Twentieth Century.

During 2011 the library staff at Inje University digitalized the entire series of our annual Transactions as well as of 2 monthly periodicals (the Korean Repository and the Korea Review) published in the decades before and after 1900 by our founders. The files are already viewable through our home page. In this way we have made a very valuable set of historic materials available to the world. This project was financed by the Academy of Korean Studies and I want to express our appreciation to them.

Our lectures in 2011 were always well attended, and often really very well attended. One of the greatest challenges in 2011 was a sudden,
brutal drop in the number of people interested in going on the cultural excursions we have been organizing for so many years. It is true that sometime information was not available early enough, and people seem to be busier than ever, but we hope to continue to run these excursions and I would urge members to indicate the kind of destinations that would interest them and help us by their suggestions for improvement.

I would like to close by inviting all our members and friends to offer their advice and perhaps volunteer to help in some way. For example, we need help to record our lectures and make them available online, and we are always looking for ways of making our activities more widely known. We would especially like to have more new members, both foreign and Korean, and reinvent the RASKB with them as it advances into its second century.

Respectfully submitted
Brother Anthony of Taizé
President, RASKB
2011 RAS-KB Lectures

January 18  Mr. Jacco Zwetsloot
From Northeast of Seoul to Inchon: when Hollywood came to Korea

January 25  Dr. Sung-Soo Kim
Ham Sok-Hon (1901-1989): A Maverick Thinker and Pacifist

February 8  Badaksori
Badaksori Performance: Pansori for Modern Life

February 15  Dr. Charlotte Horlyck
Priests, potters and politicians – a discussion on the collecting of Korean arts in the late 19th and early 20th century

March 22  Mr. Peter A. Underwood
Korean Business Culture & Managing Intercultural Operations

April 5  Prof. Peter Korniki
The fruits of vandalism: Early Korean printing in its East Asian context

April 26  Mr. Charles Goldberg
A Korean Village on the Edge of Modernity: A Retrospective Look

May 18  Dr. Earl Jackson, Jr.
Before the Wave: Treasures of Korean Classic Cinema

May 24  Brother Anthony
1911, The RASKB Reborn: a Second Centenary

June 13  Dr. Michael J. Devine
Harry F. Truman and the Korean War

June 28  Dr. Robert J. Fouser
Sŏchon: Wandering Seoul's Last "Untouched" Neighborhood

July 5  Prof. Gary Pak
Diaspora, Plantation and Independence: A Pictorial and Literary Journey of Early Koreans in Hawai‘i

July 12  Prof. Robert Buswell
Korean Buddhist Journeys to Lands Worldly and Otherworldly

September 6  Mr. Jacco Zwetsloot
Spy Hunting, Re-writing the Korean War and Sowing Fear of the World: North Korea has “manhwa” too!

September 27  Fr. Mun-su Park, S.J.
20 Years in Muak-dong -- Displacement, Gentrification, Community-building
October 10 Dr. Heather Willoughby
Constructing Gender in Korean P’ansori
October 25 Prof. Stephen Epstein
Girls' Generation? Gender, (Dis)Empowerment and K-pop
November 8 Mr. Andrew Salmon
Scorched Earth, Black Snow: British and Australian Soldiers in the Invasion of North Korea
November 22 Mr. Robert D. Neff
Scandals and gossip from Joseon Korea’s past
December 13 Dr. Jocelyn Clark
A Gayageum Evening with Jocelyn Clark

A Total of 20 lectures

The RAS gratefully acknowledges the support of the Somerset Palace, Seoul, which beginning in February 2006 granted free use of its residents’ lounge as the Society’s lecture venue.
2011 RASKB Tours

Jan. 16 Snow scenery train 8 A. Choi
Jan. 22 Winter Break Tour 7 S. Bae
Feb. 4 Bugak-san Fortress Wall Hiking 7 W. Cha
Feb. 5-6 Seorak-san Tour 7 S. Bae
Feb. 19 Pottery Kiln 13 S. Bae
Feb. 26 Furniture Museum 17 A. Choi & SH Jang
Mar. 6 Bugak Fortress hike 4 W. Cha
Mar. 13 Noryangjin Fish Market 5 M. Spavor
Mar. 13 Changdeok-gung & Biwon 18 I. Cho & S. Bae
Mar. 19 Embroidery 5 S. Bae
Mar. 26 Churches in Seoul 12 D. Adams
Mar. 27 Walking in Joseon Seoul 23 P. Bartholomew
Apr. 6 Chongno & Insadong st. food 3 J. Flinn
Apr. 9 Fortress Wall of Bugaksan 6 W. Cha
Apr. 10 Suwon 19 P. Bartholomew
Apr. 9-10 Namhaedo & Jinhae 13 S. Bae
Apr. 17 Buyo & Gongju 10 S. Bae
Apr. 21 Gyeonggido Cherry blossom 21 S. Bae
Apr. 24 Anmyeondo Island 18 A. Choi
Apr. 23-24 Gyeongju: Silla Kingdom 18 D. Adams
Apr. 29-May 2 Taipei, Taiwan 32 S. Han/ S. Bae
May 10 Buddha’s Birthday 11 S. Bae/J. Seligson
May 28-29 Tea making 12 Br. Anthony
June 11 Garden party 180
July 2 Seochon Village 21 R. Fouser
Aug. 15 Hyeonchung & Onyang museum 7 S. Bae
Aug. 20 Beopjusa & Songnisan 7 S. Bae
Sept. 3 Ceramic Kiln 9 S. Bae
Sept. 4 Cheong-pyeong Lake(boat) 14 S. Bae
Sept. 17-18 Gangneung, Gangwondo 18 P. Bartholomew
Oct 1 Bukchon village, Seoul 17 D. Mason
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Members of the R.A.S
(As of May 31, 2012)
Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch

Back issues of Transactions are available either individually or in a complete set of bound reprints (volumes 1-40) and originals, from the RASKB office. Indexes to the complete series can be viewed through the links on the sidebar. A printed Index of volumes 1-85 was published in 2011 and can be purchased from the RASKB office (send us an email to royalasiatickorea@gmail.com).

In 2011, thanks to a generous grant from the Academy of Korean Studies, the entire series was scanned and is now freely available in various formats through the Transactions link on the sidebar of our home page http://www.raskb.com/

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A list of the books available from the RAS-KB

The following books are available for purchase from the RASKB. Members of the RASKB receive a discount. For more information and to place orders, please contact the office staff by email royalasiatickorea@gmail.com or Fax: (82-2) 766-3796


A concise work rich in new information collected from unedited documents found in five European libraries, about the history of the Korean Catholic Church before the time of its officially recognized foundation in 1784. $35 / KW42,000


A fascinating look into the lives of the first Protestant missionaries to Korea: the challenges they faced in their lives, from overcoming culture shock and learning the language to raising a family and building a house; and the challenges they faced in the Christian work that they did, challenges that shaped their identities, their policies, and indeed their beliefs in the land of Korea more than a century ago. $45 / KW54,000


The only thoroughgoing study of the opening of Korea after centuries as the "Hermit Kingdom": discusses the rivalries among China, Japan, and Russia and the problems of the traditional Confucian scholar-bureaucrats trying to cope with their rapidly changing world. $35 / KW42,000

190

This detailed guidebook written by two authors who have had long experience living in the city, describes the historical monuments and sites in Seoul, grouped by neighborhoods for easy location. It includes maps, references to the subway system, diagrams and color photographs, with explanations of the history and significance of each site. There is also a Chinese-character glossary and index. $8 KW9,000


The book consists of six essays on late 19th century Korean history. All of them were originally prepared and presented as conference papers or keynote speeches at major conferences held in Korea and the US. They deal with Korea’s relations with the US and Japan mainly between 1882, when the Jeoson Kingdom signed its first modern treaty with the United States, and 1905 when the same kingdom called the Daehan (Great Han) Empire from 1987, degenerated into a protectorate of Japan. $40 / KW48,000


This book has chapters describing the origins, faith and practice of the three main 'new' religions of Korea, Cheondo-gyo, Daejong-gyo and Won-Buddhism, written by members of each, as well as general chapters considering them from a sociological viewpoint, and a Christian perspective. The book ends with a transcript of an open exchange between senior members of the religions. $35 / KW42,000


The only Korean musicologist of international repute. Dr. Lee Hye-Ku has struggled over the past few decades to keep Korean traditional music from being swallowed up in the tide of Westernization. Until
now, apart from a few translated articles, his work has been accessible only to Korean speakers. A definitive text on Korean traditional music in English. $25 / KW30,000

_Hamel's Journal and a Description of the Kingdom of Korea, 1653-1666._ Hendrik Hamel, English translation by Jean-Paul Buys, RAS-KB, 1998. Softbound. 107 pp. ISBN 89-7225-086-4

The first Western account of Korea is the glory of a group of sailors shipwrecked on Cheju-do. Some thirteen years later, after escaping to Japan, Hamel gave the outside world a firsthand description of Korea, an almost unknown country until then. Mr. Buys, who is Dutch, has made the first translation based on the original manuscript. $15 / KW18,000


The most comprehensive account ever published in English of this cataclysmic event, so little known in the West. It begins with the political and cultural background of Korea, Japan, and China, discusses the diplomatic breakdown that led to the war, describes every major incident and battle from 1592 to 1598, and introduces a fascinating cast of characters along the way. $55 / KW66,000

_In This Earth and In That Wind._ Lee O-young, translated by David Steinberg, RAS-KB, 1967. Softbound. 226 pp. ISBN 89-954424-5-X

A collection of 50 vignettes of commonplace Korean life allowing the reader to draw from the daily habits, customs and events his own picture of Korean society. The author often contrasts aspects of Korean culture with that of foreign nations and draws a variety of conclusions about Korean society from these contrasts. $10 / KW12,000


A general discussion for non-specialist Western reader. $8 / KW10,000

A reprint of the classic English-language history of Korea first published in 1927. It has been extensively annotated by Bishop Rutt with reference to sources and including commentary. It is introduced by an extensive and, to date, the only biography of Dr. Gale. a towering scholar in the early days of Western residence in Korea. $40 / KW48,000


An early study of the success of Christianity in Korea, especially in contrast to China. $12 / KW15,000


A thoroughly readable collection of critical research from prominent scholars in the fields of anthropology, religion, history, and the arts. Koreans, virtually alone in the world, have kept the ancient traditional religion of shamanism alive at a time of massive industrialization, modernization and Westernization. $35 / KW42,000


A thorough study on March First Movement, a Korean uprising against Japanese colonial rule in 1919, with special emphasis on its international implications and Britain's role in the uprising. $35 / KW42,000


A description of an attempted coup aimed at bringing more rapid reform and modernization to Korea in the early years after her opening to the rest of the world and the role of one of the leaders. The work includes an analysis of the situation in 1884 and evaluates the motives of the plotters and the results of the attempt both on the nation and for the individuals. Scholarly, yet exciting reading, and of some insight to political attitudes in Korea even today. $18 / KW22,000
A compendium of articles by a noted law professor (later Ambassador to the United States), ostensibly on various legal perceptions but giving deep insight into some of the conflicts between western and Korean legal and social concepts. Very helpful in understanding some cultural differences. $25 / KW30,000

Rural Korea in the 1950s from the perspective of a sensitive and inquisitive foreign village priest; a record of the seasons, the harvest, the customs of the people, and conversations with local Confucian scholars. $8 / KW10,000

This biography of one of the first foreign businessmen in Korea becomes the framework for a unique view of early trade issues and difficulties, with a description of life for foreign traders in Korea a century ago. $8 / KW10,000

One of the classics of Korean literature, both in its own right and as the first book to have been written entirely in Hangul, the Korean alphabet promulgated by King Sejong in 1446. This edition contains both the Korean version and a literary translation, with extensive commentary, bibliography, and glossary. $8 / KW10,000

The three most significant works of traditional Korean fiction: A Nine Cloud Dream, The True History of Queen Inhyon, and The Song of a Faithful Wife, Ch'unhyang. The major characters are all women and
the three novels together give a vivid picture of the Korean ideal of womanhood before it felt the impact of Western culture. $42 / KW54,000

Delicate word-paintings of contemporary rural Korea, its people and their changing milieu, by a sensitive author who has spent some 30 years in rural Korea. $5 / KW6,000

The author's work is based on a field study done on one of the reasons for Korea's economic miracle, the workers. Here the author focuses on the girls or the young women who work behind the scenes producing the goods that have pushed Korea into another classification. A look at background data, the workers in a Korean context, work situation, associations, relationships and future perspectives. $10 / KW12,000

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Complete bound sets of the annual journal of the RASKB are available. Each volume contains 5 issues. The early volumes are reprints, the more recent volumes bind together original copies. The price for the complete bound set will be sent on request.

A delightfully written personal, perceptive account of a long-gone Korea, shedding new light on a period too often passed over as reactionary and of no import to the modern world, but which was also a period of incredibly rapid change. The 1908 edition contains three new chapters and this edition includes a personal sketch of the author.
by her 20-year-younger sister.

**Undiplomatic Memories.** William F. Sands, 1930. RAS-KB Reprint, 1990
Softbound. 238 pp. $20 / KW24,000
A delightfully informal account of Korean affairs and foreign policy at the turn of the century as seen by a young American foreign service officer.

**The Song of a Faithful Wife**, Richard Rutt, trans. RAS-KB Reprint, 1999, Paperbound, 97 pp. $10 / KW12,000
Here is the timeless love story of Korea—the story of Ch'unhyang. An official's son and a girl of lowbirth fall in love and are secretly married. The official and his family are sent far away, and the girl becomes the property of a local official who abuses her. Her lover, though, attains the rank of government inspector and returns to punish the local official and rescue his beloved. Rutt's translation in narrative form is the most readable of English translations currently available.

The author's personal account of an early international marriage, its almost insurmountable difficulties and unexpected joys. A postscript in this edition describes the Kims' lives in Korea and America during the 25 years since the book's first publication. $18

This classic in the field of Korean studies examines the assumptions and traditions which conditioned events in late 19th century Korea. Nelson reconstructs the system of international relations which existed before the onset of Western influences. $25

One of the early English-language periodicals (monthly) on Korea,
the articles of culture, events and other Koreana provide a wealth of primary material during a fascinating period in Korean history. $200


One of the early English-language periodicals (monthly) on Korea, the articles of culture, events and other Koreana provide a wealth of primary material during a fascinating period in Korean history. $240


A classic observation of Korean culture and daily life, written by a country doctor and missionary who worked and lived in Korean in the 1950s and 1960s. While many things have changed in Korean society, Crane's observations are still valuable for both understanding modern Korea as well as having a look at Korean in days gone by. $12


A personal view of the "Hermit People" by one of Korea's most famous scholar-missionaries. Of interest both as a picture of what Korea used to be and for its frequent relevance to attitudes today. $25


The author takes a hard look at Japanese claims of their contribution to Korea during the colonial period, interpreting their own statistics to show exploitation and discrimination. $25


Ireland's study gives a positive view of the Japanese colonial rule in the mid-1920s. Detailed information on the bureaucratic and judicial systems. Stress on Japanese contribution to economic development. $25
   A collection of observations on a Korea newly opened after 500 years as a "Hermit Kingdom". The author served in Korea from 1884 to 1903, first as a missionary doctor, then as an American diplomat. $25

   Hall's 1816 account of his voyage to Korea is a classic of Far Eastern travel literature. Keen observation and vivid description characterize Hall's account of the Hermit Kingdom; he reveals, simultaneously, the deep gulf between Eastern and Western culture. $16

Books from other publishers

Korean Ideas and Values, Michael C Kalton, (Philip Jaisohn Memorial papers) Philip Jaisohn Memorial Foundation (1979) $6 / KW8,000

South Korea (P. Bartz) Clarendon Press $10 / KW12,000


Korea through Myths and Legends. Robin Rhee. Seoul Press. $25 / KW30,000


These books are available to the general public at the list price, and to RAS members at a 10% discount. Payment can be made using Paypal, once the mailing costs have been determined. Please send your orders by email to royalasiatickorea@gmail.com or write:

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