



TRANSACTIONS

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ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

KOREA BRANCH

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by Kim Young-duk

Kim Iryŏp: Pioneer Writer/Reformer in Colonial Korea

by Bonnie B.C. Oh

Selected Translations from the Poetry of Kim Iryŏp

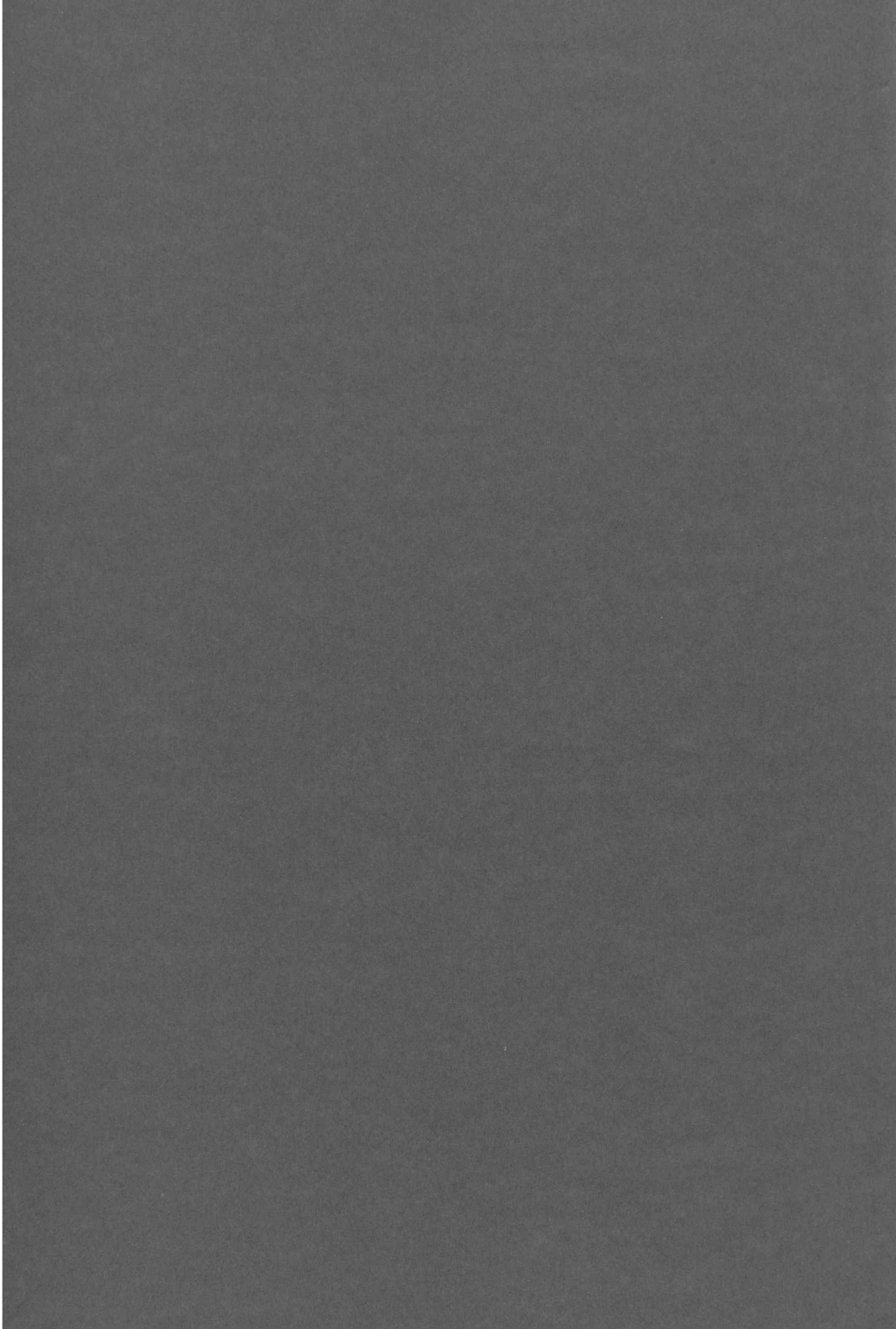
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Form and Philosophy in Korean Buddhist Temple,
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by Valeri Tian



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Introduction

Japan was called Wae (pronounced "Wei" in Chinese, the Chinese name for the country of the Great People) since the early 5th century. There was the case of a Paekche letter to the world by an adopted military production of which ruled by a ruler who appointed to the post by the great king of Paekche. An entry in the *Yudenshi*, a Japanese chronicle written in AD 720 [1], tells a story was the origin of the name of Wae, or Yaman of Japan. Nobody seems to have paid much attention to this statement until the discovery of King Muryong's tomb at Kangu, Chollabuk-do, Korea, in 1978.

The discovery of artifacts and an epitaph of the king brought a big change in historians' views on the international status of Paekche and on its relationships with other states. Thanks to this discovery, we now know that King Muryong's real name in life was Sarin and have been able to establish the exact dates of his birth and death as well as his imperial name [3].

Among the many relics found in the tomb were gold-braided ornaments and a pair of gilt lacquer shoes with spikes on the soles. Such articles were symbols of a king's status. These and other archaeological findings provide strong evidence of the connection between King Muryong and the ancient kings of Wae Japan.

In addition to the archaeological evidence, Chinese chronicles of the 5th and 6th centuries [2] give many references to the name of Paekche. Particularly noteworthy is the text of epitaph that appears in the chronicles of China's Liu Song Dynasty. Chapter 456, the text of the epitaph suggests that its sender, Wae King Mu, was a royal prince, son of King Karro of Paekche, who reigned from 450 to 475. These and other pieces of evidence are dealt in detail in two recently published articles produced by the Korean Broadcasting System and entitled "The

Wae Japan as a Tamno of Paekche

By Kim Young-duk

I. INTRODUCTION

Japan was called Wae (pronounced "Wo" in Chinese, the character means 'country of the small people') until the early 8th century. *Tamno* was the title of a Paekche office or the word for an acquired territory, province, or colony ruled by a lesser king appointed to the post by the great king of Paekche. As stated in the *Nihonshoki*, a Japanese chronicle written in AD 720 [1] [2], a *tamno* was the origin of the state of Wae, or Yamato, of Japan. Nobody seems to have paid much attention to this statement until the discovery of King Muryōng's tomb at Kongju, Chōllabuk-do, Korea, in 1971.

The discovery of artifacts and an epitaph of the king brought a big change in historians' views on the international status of Paekche and on its relationships with other states. Thanks to this discovery, we now know that King Muryōng's real name in life was Sama and have been able to confirm the exact dates of his birth and death as well as his imperial status. [3]

Among the many relics found in the tomb were gold diadem ornaments and a pair of gilt bronze shoes with spikes on the soles. Such artifacts were symbols of a king's status. These and other archeological findings provide strong evidence of the connection between King Muryōng and the *tamno* kings of Wae Japan.

In addition to the archeological evidence, Chinese chronicles of the 5th and 6th centuries [7] give many references to the *tamno* of Paekche. Particularly noteworthy is the text of an epistle that appears in the chronicles of China's Liu Song Dynasty. Dated 458, the text of the letter suggests that its sender, Wae King Mu, was a royal prince, son of King Kaero of Paekche, who reigned from 450 to 475. These and other pieces of evidence are dealt in detail in two remarkable videos produced by the Korean Broadcasting System and entitled, "The

Secrets of King Muryong's Tomb" and "The Secrets of the Twenty-Two Tamno." In this article we try to summarize the archeological and historical evidence that leads so convincingly to the conclusion that King Mu of Wae Japan in the late 5th century was none other than King Muryōng in his youth.

II. TAMNO

Based on the book *Piryu Paekche and the Origin of Japan*, by Kim Sungho, [1] the videos produced by the KBS team probe the word *tamno*, which is somewhat similar to the modern Korean word *tamuri*, used in Chōllado to mean a wall or boundary. [Editor's note: It should be pointed out here that we have romanized the word as *tamno* in accordance with the modern pronunciation and the rules of the Mc Cune-Reischauer system. The word is spelt, however, with characters that separately are pronounced *tam-* and *-ro*.] *Tamno* is understood to mean an 'expanse of land bounded by a stone wall' or 'territory' or 'province.' *Tamuri* may be related to the word *tamul*, 'a newly acquired piece of land,' and to the word *tamno*, 'an acquired territory or province.' In fact, a long string of place-names containing *tamul* or words that bear a close resemblance to it stretches all along the west coast of Korea and around the southern end of the peninsula to Tsushima, which is written with Chinese characters pronounced *taemal* in Korean. [Editor's note: Although the second character is read only as *ma* in modern Korean, in the *idu* style of reading and writing used in olden days, the character could also be read *mal*.] The word *tamno* is doubtless also related to an ancient name for Cheju Island, which was once called T'amna, and there exists an island near Osaka, the name of which is written with the same Chinese characters as the Korean *tamno*, but pronounced *awaji*, as attested by the author of the *Nihonshoki*. [2] This naming of new land using an old name is similar to what the Europeans did in the New World when they dubbed their new homes Nova Scotia, New England, New York, or even just Boston or Manchester, recalling the place-names of the "old country."

It is of interest that the name of one god among the many who founded Wae was also Tamul. [6] In the mythology of the *Nihonshoki*, one god, called Susanoonamikado, came from Kumanari, or today's Kongju, and then passed via Soshimori, or the present Chinhae, and eventually settled down in a middle eastern part of Kyushu near a peak which faces Korea and founded a state called Hiuga. It is surprising that, as evidence keeps mounting, more and more of these statements prove to be true or to contain elements of truth.

III. A GILT BRONZE CROWN AND A PAIR OF GILT BRONZE SHOES AS SYMBOLS OF A KING

As archeology in Korea and Japan makes advances and as the excavation of old tombs proceeds, we find many similarities between the artifacts retrieved in both countries, especially artifacts dating from the 5th and 6th centuries.

The KBS videos mention the similarity in pottery from numerous side-tunnel tombs of the Paekche style in the Asuka area of Japan to the pottery of Paekche. Even the flat irons from Asuka area tombs are found to be identical to those of King Muryōng's tomb. The Minegasuka tomb in Asuka yielded a sword and numerous pieces of jewelry, including necklaces, which are identical in material and design to the same kinds of objects found in King Muryōng's tomb.

Most surprising is the discovery of corresponding sets of regalia consisting of a gilt bronze crown and gilt bronze shoes of distinctive design in both Korea and Japan. One set was found at Ipchōmni, Chōllabuk-do, and one at Naju, Chōllanam-do. On the other side of the sea, one set was found in the Funayama tomb on Kyushu, and another in the Fujinoki tomb in Nara. All of these gilt bronze shoes have a turtle-back design as well as about nine spikes on the soles. They are all identical to those found in the King Muryōng's tomb.

It is quite contrary to our common sense to think any person of lesser status than a king could wear such regal symbols. As we learn from Prof. Soh Jinchul's book *The World of King Muryōng as Seen in Metal and Stone Relics* [3], the status of King Muryōng was that of emperor or great king ruling over feudal kings, or *tamno* kings, upon whom he bestowed such items as symbols of the entitlement he had granted them.

IV. TAMNO AS RECORDED IN CHINESES CHRONICLES [7]

It is most fortunate that diplomatic documents from Paekche and Wae Japan were recorded in the Chinese chronicles of 5th and 6th centuries. These Chinese chronicles state that Paekche ruled her territories, called *tamno*, by appointing kings as their rulers. The names of the twenty-two *tamno* are listed, and the names of eleven *tamno* kings are given.

It is noteworthy to find the name of King Konji, the brother of King Kaero, on the list of *tamno* kings. While he was on his way to the Asuka area of Japan in 461, accompanied by his pregnant sister-in-law, she gave birth to the future

King Muryōng on an island near Kyushu. King Konji lived in the Asuka area until 477 and is memorialized in a shrine the dates of which coincide with the seventeen years of the reign of the Wae King Hūng, or Ko in Japanese. Thus, he could have been the King Hūng of Wae.

King Konji was the most powerful man in Paekche next to King Kaero. Konji's son eventually became the 24th king, Tongsōng, and his nephew Sama became the 25th king, Muryōng.

One most surprising bit of evidence is an epistle [5] sent by a king of Wae in 478 to Liang China. According to Prof. Soh Jinchul [3], this king of Wae must have been King Muryōng in his youth, entitled as King Mu, or Bu in Japanese, the *tamno* king of Wae. He lists many reasons for this conclusion.

This document begins with a statement that the King Mu's ancestor Nyeh had conquered so many barbaric states in the west and so many hairy peoples to the east and so many states in the north. Then it goes on to state that the aggressive country of Koguryō is a threat to Paekche, which King Mu wants to support. However, he says he was unable to send his army immediately because of the sudden death of his father and brother. He goes on to say that now that the period of mourning is over, he is ready to send his army to fight Koguryō with the support of China. Prof. Soh points out that this document could have been written only by a son of King Kaero, who was killed along with one of his sons in a battle with the Koguryō army in 475 in the area of present-day Seoul. Thus King Mu must be King Muryōng as a *tamno* king of Wae in his youth. Prof. Soh presents a very reasonable and convincing argument.

Soh [3] also points out correctly that the name Sama, which is inscribed on the bronze mirror [8] of Sumidahachimangu Shrine, was King Muryōng's real name in life. The inscription on the mirror says that Sama, as the great king or emperor, had it made as a gift to his successor, *tamno* king Ooto, in 503.

Another important point made by Soh is the correct interpretation of the inscription on the famous seven-branch sword of the late 4th century kept at Ishigami Shrine, which he reads as saying that the sword was given to a lesser king in Wae Japan by the Great King of Paekche.

There were five kings of Wae who sent state documents to China. Two of these kings have now been identified as King Konji and King Muryōng while the other three are yet to be identified.

Also, who could the ancestor Nyeh mentioned in the 478 Wae epistle to China be? These are fascinating questions still to be answered.

V. CONCLUSION

We have examined and reviewed some of the evidence presented in the KBS videos relevant to the statements about *tamno* in the Japanese chronicle *Nihonshoki* and about *tamno* as recorded in Chinese chronicles as well as such archeological remains as the identical gilt bronze crowns and pairs of gilt bronze shoes found in various royal tombs. We have also looked at documents from 5th-Century Wae Japan as recorded in Chinese chronicles.

All this evidence leads one to conclude definitely that Wae Japan in the 5th and 6th centuries was a *tamno*, or feudal land, under Paekche.

NOTES

1. Kim, Sungho. *Piryu Paekche and the Origin of Japan*. Chimumsa Press, 1982.
2. *Nihonshoki* [AD 720], Vol. I, "Gods' Era" Chapter, Section 4.
3. Soh, Jinchul. *The World of King Muryōng as Seen in Metal and Stone Relics*. Wonkwang University Press, 1994.
In Chapter 2, Soh points out that King Muryōng's epitaph describes his death using the Chinese character (pronounced *pung* in Korea) which is reserved for the deaths of emperors only.
4. Pictures of gilt bronze crown and shoes.
5. Epistle of Wae King Mu sent to Liu Song China in 478.
6. *Nihonshoki*, Vol. I, "Gods' Era" Chapter, Section 6.
This god's name, as written with Chinese characters, is read as Oomono in Japanese but as Taemul in Korean.
7. Liu Song Chronicles (458), Wei Chronicles (472), Southern Qi Chronicles (490, 495), Liang Chronicles (502)
8. The bronze mirror at Sumidahachimangu Shrine with its inscription, a Japanese national treasure

REFERENCE

Epistle of Wae King Mu sent to Liu Song China in 478

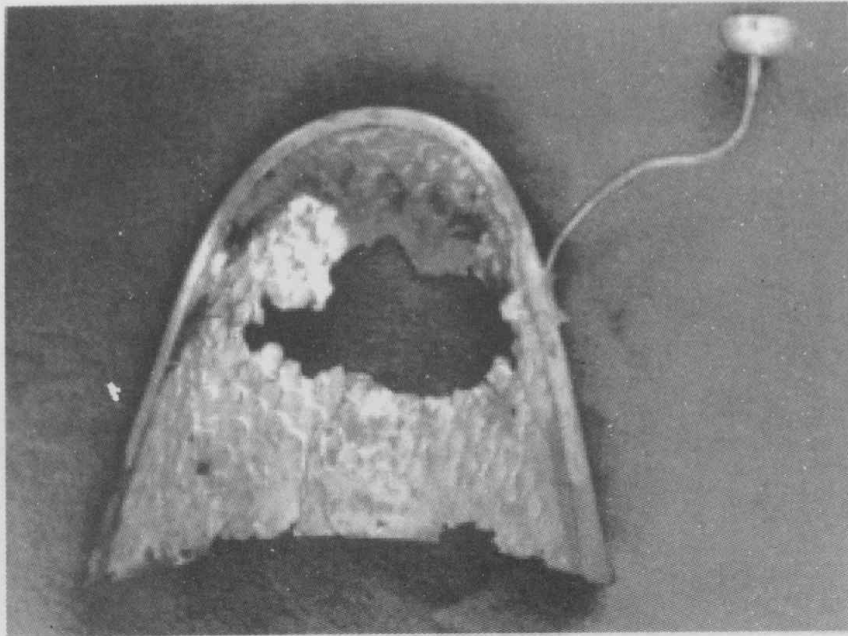
"Our land is located far away from your majesty's land but guarding your bordering land in firmness. Our ancestor Nyeh was always on the alert, touring the land and ruling it directly, by himself, ever ready in armor.

He subjugated 55 states of the hairy people to the east, 66 states of barbaric people to the west, and 95 states in the north across the sea and extended our land and enhanced our authority.

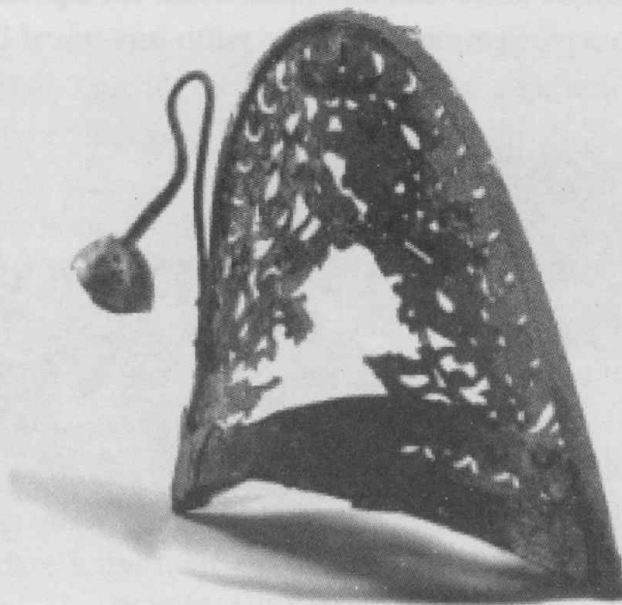
We have always maintained our courtesy by sending our emissaries to the distant land of Your Majesty. With your grace we have governed our land in dignity, without disgracing our ancestors despite our humbleness. Although we have wanted to pay our homage by sailing to you, our way is often hampered by the ruthless country of Koguryō, which is bent on plundering and harassing its bordering peoples. For this reason our way is often blocked and our tributes are lost. Sometimes we can make it to your land, but often we cannot.

Lest Paekche fall, we were ready to dispatch an army of a million to strike Koguryō, encouraged by the cheering voice of justice. However, my father and brother were lost suddenly just before our campaign. We had to stay behind to offer our memorial services in a temporary shrine in honor of the deceased. However we cannot stay behind forever. We are now ready in armor and in spirit to carry out the revenge we wish for for our father and brother. Our loyal soldiers are ready to fight the enemy with courage and determination. With your grace and support we are ready to conquer this ruthless enemy, which we will do to the honor of Your Majesty.

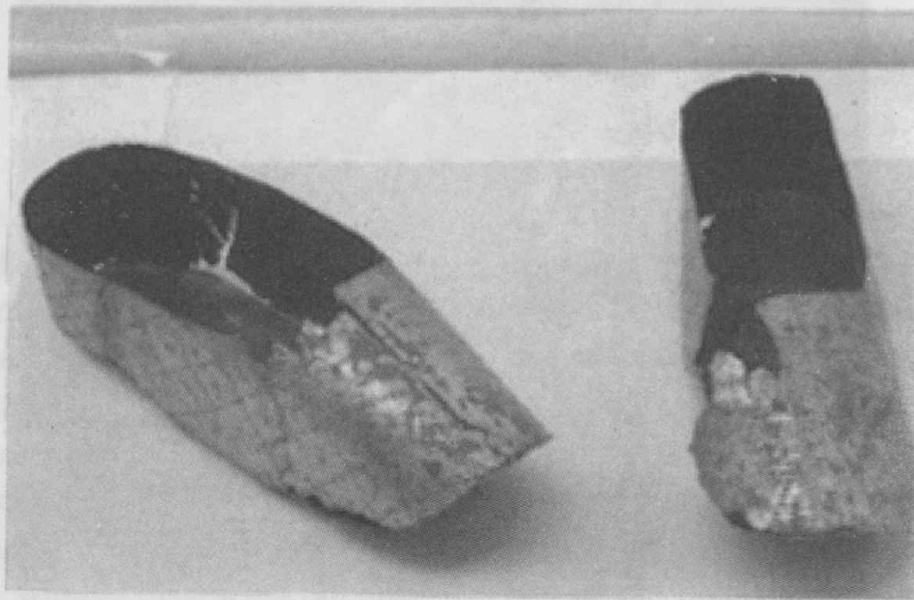
We, your loyal subjects, have been dutifully governing our people and humbly request that you grant us the title of King, the Andong Martial, Ruler of Wae, Shilla, Imna, Kaya, Jinhan, and Mahan.



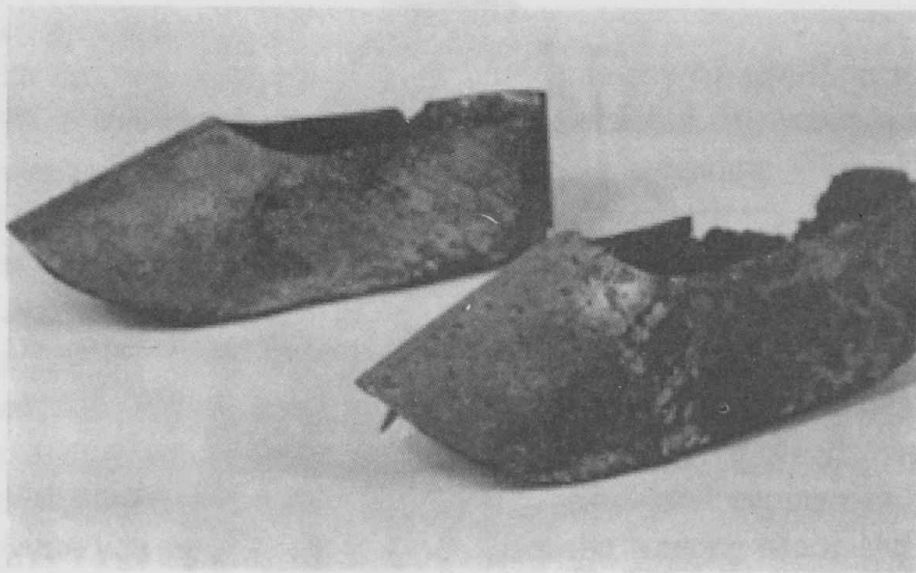
Gilt Bronze Crown from Ipchönni-Chollado



Bilt Bronze Crown from Funayame Tomb, Japan



Gilt Bronze Shoes from Ipchönni-Chollapukdo



Gilt Bronze Shoes from Funayama Tomb, Japan

Kim Iryöp: Pioneer Writer/Reformer in Colonial Korea

by *Bonnie B.C. Oh*

INTRODUCTION

Kim Iryöp¹ (金一葉 1896-1971) was a pioneer feminist, an essayist/poet, and a Buddhist nun. Until the late 1970s, she was not well known as a serious literary figure, perhaps for three main reasons: first, contemporary literary critics did not regard Iryöp and other women writers (*yöryu chakka* 女流作家) as deserving of serious consideration; second, her reputation as an advocate of women's rights overshadowed her literary accomplishments; and third, her literary activities were not well publicized after she became a Buddhist nun. But she was one of the most prolific of the first group of women writers, and she considered herself first and foremost a writer. She wrote a total of 58 poems, 35 of which were penned after entering the mountain,² and 16 novels and short stories, all of which were published before becoming a nun.³

Kim was a serious advocate for reform. Her life may be seen as a paradigm of the first generation of modern women intellectuals. She was outspoken against social ills; she led an unusual life, and was ostracized by society, but she ultimately overcame criticism, unlike two of her close associates, the artist Na Hye-sök (羅惠錫 1886-1946) and the novelist Kim Myöng-sun (金明淳 1900-?), and survived to be admired as a great woman.⁴ As a young woman in the 1920s in Korea, she saw that the greatest need for change lay in improving women's status. The place and time of her birth and youth led her to become a writer and reformer. Before discussing Kim's life, we need to take a brief look at the setting in which she lived and wrote:

THE SETTING

Of three and a half decades of Japanese rule in Korea, the decade of the 1920s was a time of brief flowering of Korean culture under the official "cultural" policy of the colonial government. During this middle decade, Japan was reconsidering its harsh rule of Korea during the first decade of colonization, which culminated in a mass uprising, the Samil Undong (March First Movement) of 1919; and Korea was exhausted from the years of ceaseless militant resistance ending in a heroic uprising that nevertheless failed miserably.

The decade of the 1920s began for Koreans with a feeling of despair following the failure of the 1919 Independence Movement.⁵ The Japanese succeeded in brutally suppressing the revolt but, recognizing the futility of using naked force to subjugate Koreans, they initiated a shift in policy. Governor-General Terauchi Taisuke was replaced by Admiral Saito Makoto, a suave former diplomat, fluent in English, who announced, upon assuming the post in August of 1919, that he would respect Korean culture and promote the well-being of the Korean people. Promising freedom of expression, he formally allowed, for the first time since the annexation in 1910, the publication of Korean language materials.

As the Japanese rulers removed the more obnoxious aspects of colonial rule and set forth the new "cultural" policy, intellectual Korean nationalists, drained of energy and disillusioned, took advantage of the openings offered. Although nothing fundamental had changed, "an atmosphere of experiment prevailed in the colony in the early 1920s, as Koreans tested the new boundaries and the colonial administration contemplated the limits of their tolerance. While binding Korea ever more tightly to Japan, the new cultural policy featured cosmetic changes."⁶

The "cultural" policy allowed newly educated Koreans to gather together as they had never done before.⁷ Numerous Korean language periodicals, newspapers, and books were published in the first half of the decade. Two of the oldest Korean language dailies, the *Tong'a Ilbo* (東亞日報) and the *Chosŏn Ilbo* (朝鮮日報) were first published at this time. In 1920 and 1921 alone about thirty monthly magazines were published, though few of them lasted more than a few months before being suppressed by the Japanese authorities or succumbing to financial difficulties.⁸

KOREAN LITERATURE IN THE 1920S

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, very little literature was written in *han'gŭl* (한글), the Korean writing system. Although *han'gŭl* had been invented in the middle of the fifteenth century under the direction of King Sejong,⁹ it was used mostly by and for the uneducated, uncultured masses and women. *Hanmun* (漢文, Chinese) was the language of literature and of all official documents in Korea. Under the influence of Western ideas and the threat of foreign encroachment, however, a new national consciousness began to emerge. Literature written in Chinese began to be displaced by literature written in *han'gŭl*, called the New Literature.

In 1908 a young poet named Ch'oe Nam-sŏn (崔南善)¹⁰ began publishing a magazine called *Sonyŏn* (少年 Youth). It was the first even quasi-literary magazine in the history of Korean literature. In this and other magazines produced between 1910 and 1918, Ch'oe Nam-sŏn, in collaboration with another fervent young nationalist-cum-writer, named Yi Kwang-su¹¹ (李光洙), provided a forum for the work and ideas of young writers. The interests of Ch'oe and Yi were more national than literary, and their work was designed to promote nationalism and enlightenment. Young people rallied to the cause of reviving Korea, but all their hopes were rudely shattered by the failure of the March First Independence Movement in 1919.

Perhaps the most serious effect of the March First Movement was the intellectual disillusionment which followed in its wake.¹² Its failure brought profound disappointment to Korean youth. This was reflected in the literature of the 1920s which was full of escapism and despair. Educated young Koreans felt that their nation's future was bleak. Their choices were extremely limited—complete escape from and denial of reality, collaboration with the Japanese, adoption of the nationalist theme of “strengthening the nation,” or following the road of Marxism. For concerned youth of Korea, the first two were no choices at all. Some, therefore, opted to take the gradualist approach of “strengthening the nation,” while others, feeling impatient with such moderate means, leaned toward Marxist ideology, and advocated direct confrontation with the Japanese and immediate independence. When this latter group organized the Korean Artists Proletarian Federation, KAPF, in 1925, the split between the moderates and radicals became permanent.¹³

Yi Kwang-su was one of those who adopted a moderate approach.¹⁴ Up to 1919 Yi had been a radical, idealistic nationalist demanding and working for immediate independence for Korea. Dismayed by the failure of the March First Movement and disillusioned by divisive leadership among the exiled

leaders of the Provisional Government in Shanghai, which he visited in 1920, he became a realist, thinking in terms of what was feasible *here and now*, with independence as a long-range goal.¹⁵ He called for working within the colonial system while emphasizing morality, education, and improvement in social life, using his novels as vehicles to propagate his ideas.¹⁶

Not everybody subscribed to this didactic role for literature. Reaction came in the form of Korea's first purely literary magazine, *Ch'angjo* (創造 Creation), written and published by a group that was inspired and led by a brilliant, if rather eccentric, young man named Kim Tong-in (金東仁).¹⁷ *Ch'angjo* was a manifesto for literary realism, its avowed purpose not political propaganda, but depicting life as it was. It advocated literature in the Western tradition of "art for art's sake," an almost revolutionary concept of art in Eastern thinking. A whole new group of writers sprang up. They began to write about Korea and Korean life as they found it. "Reality as it is" was their slogan, and this reality was a very grim one indeed.

The young writers belonging to both of these groups had studied in Japan and had been introduced to the works of Zola, Maupassant, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Turgenev. These Western and Eastern European writers had a tremendous appeal for young Korean intellectuals, mainly because they described depressing political situations—in France the aftermath of defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, and in Russia the corruption of the Czarist government—that seemed similar to the situation of Korea under Japanese colonialism. Depicting life as they observed it, Korean writers developed a type of hyper-realism, "Korean naturalism," that became the dominant literary trend of the 1920s. It was "a literature written with the pessimism of Zola or Maupassant and with the morbidity of Dostoevsky."¹⁸

Korean stories of the 1920s are full of the themes of self-destruction and submission to fate. Always, the characters are walking a path that leads to devastation. This path may be sex, liquor, social inhibition, or some inner compelling force like human weakness or some uncontrollable external force like fate, but always the end is the same—inevitable ruin. Characters in stories are predoomed to certain defeat, because the spiritual can never master the physical, which in these stories is a metaphor for weakness or corruption. The intellectual youth of the 1920s had a vision of ideal life which was unattainable. They felt they could not obtain it because of the blind, irrational element in human beings which was certain to defeat them in their aspirations.¹⁹

And yet, 1920s youth cherished life, especially life that was accompanied by love. To them love was the ultimate ideal. It alone could give meaning to life. Young men and women of the period were preoccupied with this newly

discovered, and yet elusive, human emotion. When love failed, life failed, and only emptiness remained. Love was an unattainable ideal; the animal in man precluded its realization. The situation of 1920s Korea created an attitude of mind among intellectual youth which predisposed them to write "a literature of disillusion." This was not a literary theory but an attitude to life and society.²⁰

The works of the writers reflected these trends. Literature with enlightenment messages was published in quasi-literary magazines such as *Ch'öngnyön* (青年 Youth) and *Shinyöja* (新女子 New woman), while works of the realists appeared in the literary magazines, *Ch'angjo* (創造 Creation), *Kaeböök* (開闢 Creation), *Paekcho* (白潮 White tide) and *P'yehö* (廢墟 Ruin). Writers contributing to *Ch'angjo* and *Kaeböök* tended to be less despairing than those who published in *Paekjo* and *P'yeho*.

It was in this atmosphere that women writers, including Kim Iryöp and her close friends, Kim Myöng-sun and Na Hye-sök,²¹ wrote. Few in number and excluded from male writers' circles, women writers did not split into didactic and naturalist schools. The same women wrote pieces advocating reform while simultaneously depicting the grim reality of Korea in the 1920s.

WOMEN INTELLECTUALS

Despite much talk of reforms since the 1890s, and "new culture" in the 1920s, few reforms of any significance had actually taken place in Korea. The very nature of colonial rule was opposed to any profound alteration of existing circumstances. If modernization inevitably brought disruption and dislocation, it was to be avoided by any means, for an unsettled society was hard to rule. The Japanese authorities found it more advantageous to maintain the *status quo* in Korean society. They courted the support of well-to-do moderate Koreans for their rule and gave lukewarm approval to minor, non-political activities and reform attempts of young Koreans, but relentlessly suppressed nationalist movements.

Ironically, some Koreans themselves resisted the few Japanese government-sponsored reforms, even when the long-range effect of reforms might have important benefits. They mistakenly regarded the Japanese-sponsored reforms as the colonial master's attempt to eradicate Korea's past and tradition. The cases in point are the reforms related to family and women. The result was that the customs affecting women were tenaciously preserved. Men continued to dominate in Korea under Japanese rule. Almost all norms that

guided women and family life remained intact. Women were held firmly in their traditional roles throughout the colonial period. Even for those women who had the means to leave the conventional family and live on their own, the social stigma for doing so was too great to bear for long. The few who dared did so at the risk of falling into poverty, tainting their reputations and their families' honor, and living completely isolated lives.

In the 1920s, there were only a few newly educated women who were brave enough to break away from the established standards. Many of these pioneers were creatively inclined artists and writers. They were advocates of extensive reform to enhance women's positions. They tried to practice what they preached by living as fully liberated human beings. They attempted to have careers and intellectual pursuits of their own. They divorced their husbands or were divorced by them, abandoned their lovers, and were deserted by them. They lived with men without the benefit of matrimony, and constantly spoke out against oppressive customs affecting women, demanding complete equality between the sexes. They hoped to be models of the "new woman" for other ordinary women, but few outside their small circles dared to emulate them. They were ridiculed, ostracized, and considered decadent and immoral by self-righteous women, by their former patrons, co-workers, and lovers. Their lives often ended in tragedy.²²

Women intellectuals of the 1920s in Korea felt that they had been betrayed both by Korean men and the Japanese authorities. They had participated, side by side with men, in the national struggle for survival and independence from the beginning, starting in the first decade of the twentieth century. But their efforts had received little recognition, and their call for improvement of women's position had been ignored by their male compatriots.²³ By the 1920s, disillusioned, but desperate to bring about changes, they reassessed their course of action. Instead of directly participating in the national independence struggle, they concentrated on enlightening women, on reforming and working toward the abolition of old social customs and systems that perpetuated women's subordinate position. Seizing the opportunity of the new culture policy, these women turned their pens into weapons. They formed and led women's organizations and published the first women's magazine, *Shinyōja*.

These women considered themselves privileged elites and felt morally obligated to lead their less fortunate sisters. They were indeed a remarkable lot. Unusual times produce unusual people. The majority were born during the last decade of the nineteenth century, came of age in the declining years of the Yi dynasty and matured during the harsh "dark age" of the first decade of Japanese rule. They were educators, radical reformers, iconoclastic writers and

artists, who tirelessly wrote to enlighten their sisters. Kim Iryöp belonged to this remarkable first generation of Korean women intellectuals.²⁴ Never before had such a rare group of women appeared in Korean history.

As a member of this first group of women intellectuals, Kim Iryöp represented a variant prototype. She shared with many of her female compeers an obsession to enhance women's position, gain the freedom to love, and establish dignity for women as human beings. But unlike some others, who turned to establishing or leading educational institutions as devout Protestant Christians, Iryöp remained a free-spirited writer/poet by leaving the Protestant Church she was born into. Iryöp was also different from two of her closest friends, the novelist Kim Myöng-sun and the artist Na Hye-sök, in that she managed to take control of her life and avoid falling victim to despairing tendencies, but only by becoming a Buddhist nun and giving up the free lifestyle of creative intellectuals of the 1920s in Korea.

EARLY LIFE

Kim Iryöp's given name was Wön-ju (元周). Her father, whom she confessed to have worshipped,²⁶ was one of the first Korean ministers, predisposing him to progressive ideas. Even so, he was not overly enthusiastic about his daughter receiving formal education away from home. It was her mother who instilled in Wön-ju the importance of education and self-reliance as a human being. She did not raise her daughter merely as a female child to be married off. Much later in her life, Wön-ju recalled that her mother hoped to raise a daughter better than other women's ten sons, and wanted her to become a prominent person. With such thoughts in her mind, Wön-ju's mother did not teach her any of the "womanly duties."²⁷

Wön-ju's place of birth, near Pyöngyang, an ancient capital and the second largest city in Korea, was considered reform-oriented at the turn of the century and very nationalistic after the Japanese annexation of the country. The era of Wön-ju's birth and youth was politically chaotic but progressive. The Yi Dynasty of Korea was in the last decade and a half of its existence and frantic attempts were made to save the kingdom by various groups—the young progressives, the government in power, and the Western, mostly American, missionaries. The young reformers and Western missionaries also advocated women's education and established schools for girls as well as boys.²⁸

By 1896 when Wön-ju was born, Ewha, the first mission school for girls, was ten years old, and the missionaries no longer had to recruit destitute

young women, literally from the streets, to be students at the school. So, it seemed appropriate that Wŏn-ju, the first-born daughter of a protestant minister, be sent to a mission elementary school at the young age of nine. Two years later, she was sent to Samsŏng Common School in the city of Chinnamp'o. Few girls of the time were so privileged to receive formal education at such a young age.

Wŏn-ju started writing young. Her first published piece was a poem, "Death of a Sister,"²⁹ which she composed when she was only eleven and overcome by grief at her sister's death.³⁰ As the beginning of the poem shows, the sentiment expressed is simple, but considering her youth, it is a quite sophisticated free-style poem entirely in *han'gŭl*.

My cute little sister!
If you could wake up
Like new buds in the spring...

Her other siblings died in quick succession and she grew up almost as an only child. She lost her mother at age fourteen and her father a few years later. She had lost all of her immediate family by the age of twenty-one. Her feelings of loss and isolation, her awareness of human mortality and uncertainty, would have a profound impact on her and partly contribute to her becoming a poet and, later, a Buddhist nun. Around this time, her first marriage—to a one-legged, older businessman—took place.³¹

All through her tragic experiences and her unhappy first marriage, she continued her studies at Ewha, with her maternal grandmother's financial assistance,³² and graduated in 1918. In the following year, she participated actively in the Independence Movement, making and distributing handbills. Later in that year, she went to Japan, perhaps to escape her disastrous marriage,³³ and enrolled in the Tokyo English Institute. Returning to Seoul early in 1920, she began publishing *Shinyŏja*, the first women's magazine, with the financial assistance and support of Ewha Women's School.³⁴ Thus began the career of the pioneer feminist writer, Iryŏp (一葉 One-leaf).³⁵

KIM IRYŎP'S WRITINGS

Critical Essays

Kim Iryŏp's career as a serious writer began with the first women's magazine, *Shinyŏja* (New woman), published between March and June of 1920.³⁶

Although the magazine lasted only four issues, in that short time Kim published seventeen pieces: seven essays on women, two random thoughts, five poems, and three short stories. A theme running through all of her writings on women was liberation—the liberation of women through understanding reality, through education, and through breaking away from the old family system and from oppressive traditions. Writing was her main medium and *Shinyöja* was her first vehicle. Like many of her male contemporaries, she used her writing to spread her ideas to serve people,³⁷ not necessarily to bring pleasures from reading—whether critical essays, poems, or short stories.

After the magazine closed, she published in daily newspapers, such as the *Tong'a Ilbo* (東亞日報) and the *Chosön Ilbo* (朝鮮日報) and also in literary magazines, such as *Chosön Mundan* (Literary World of Korea) and *Kaebiyök*. Since *Kaebiyök* was the longest lasting of the literary magazines, and the founders and contributors of *Kaebiyök* were a tightly knit group of men, this was considered a great honor and recognition for a women writer.

Most of her essays on women were written before 1927. She wrote very little during the five-year period between 1927 and 1932, obviously a time of great emotional turmoil for her and perhaps of preparation for the religious life. After 1932, when she settled down in the mountainous retreat of Sudökša Buddhist temple, she concentrated her efforts on writing poems, mostly with love themes, only occasionally veering from this new focus.³⁸

Her early essay topics ranged widely from daily issues to the lofty ideals of national and human liberation, but one concern that obsessed her was women's "liberation." Within this theme, she discussed such topics as "women and society," "self-awakening for women," "women and education," and "love, marriage, and the family."

Women and society: Kim Iryöp saw a direct link between women's status and the nature of a society. In "Reconstruction and Liberation," written as the introduction to the first issue of *Shinyöja*, Kim Iryöp called for the liberation of women from thousands of years' imprisonment in the inner chambers. She declared it was time for reconstruction from the ruins. She asked,

What should we rebuild? We should rebuild the whole society. If we want to rebuild society we need to restructure the family which is the basic unit of society. If we want to reorganize the family, we need to liberate women. If we [Koreans] want to live like other people in the world, if we don't want to be defeated by other powerful people, we need to rebuild all aspects of society. In order to do this, we must liberate women.³⁹

Notice her emphasis on the benefits society would gain as a consequence of women's liberation. In another short article written a month later, she said a happy society was one in which women were happy.⁴⁰ Thus, she linked enhancing women's position with general social progress, making it essential for national salvation and ultimate independence.

Self-awakening for women: In "The New Women's Demands and Claims," published in the second issue of *Shinyōja*, Kim warned that sacrifice was necessary in order to improve Korean women's conditions;⁴¹ in matters concerning women, Korean society was extremely backward, and if left alone, it would continue without much change, bringing misery to many future generations of women. Even if it meant sacrifice, if no one stepped forward to correct the many abuses, Korean women would be condemned to despair for eternity. Kim called for women to break out of old traditions and start on their way to self-fulfillment. She observed that while men called this "women's self-ruin and [women's] betrayal of family and society," it was men who mistreated women, who treated them as no better than animals. She attacked the notion of man's superiority in mental and physical strength as misinformation on which the rationale for all the abusive rules, such as the Three Obediences, was based.⁴²

Women were not without blame, however. Women had suffered because they had acquiesced. Now the time had arrived for women to wake up and establish a new society of free individuals where there were no restrictions based on gender and where liberty existed along with equality of privilege, obligation, work, and play. There would be no gain without a fight and no victory without individual sacrifice.⁴³

She repeatedly emphasized the need for women to understand their position in life. In "First, Know the Reality," she urged women to examine their position: it is true, women need to be treated equally with men, but in order for this to happen women themselves must understand that they are not treated as the equals of men; must be willing to break with the past; must destroy old ideas and customs; and must recreate themselves as "new women."⁴⁴ Thus, educating women was essential—to inform, awaken, and mobilize them into action.

Education of women: Educating women was necessary not just for the sake of women but for strengthening the nation as a whole. In traditional Korea, Kim lamented, women were hardly educated. What little education women received only encouraged them to be dependent on and completely

obedient to men. Even in the 1920s, some men continued to oppose women's education. Kim attributed the might of the industrialized Great Powers to better educated mothers, freer atmosphere in homes, and better educated children. Korean society was so backward because women, the most important element in the society, were not educated. They were only taught *pudo yöjjik* (wifely demeanor and women's work), namely, how to serve the parents-in-law, the husband, and all the brothers and sisters-in-law; how to prepare (but not participate in) the ancestral ceremonies; how to raise children, and how to perform all the household tasks of cooking, cleaning, washing, and sewing.⁴⁵

She observed that many women who had received the new higher education espoused noble ideals and wanted desperately to work toward enlightening other women and improving women's status in Korea. At the same time, these women desired to contribute to the general social well-being, but Korean society was too backward to understand them and allow them to do their work.⁴⁶ Women needed to be educated in the same way as men. They had to be educated to enlighten the society as a whole, to usher in changes that would strengthen the nation.

Love, Marriage, and Family: Nowhere were Kim Iryöp's ideas more iconoclastic than in the matters dearest to her heart—love, marriage, and the family. Perhaps because these matters were the most difficult for her to resolve in her own life, they were the ones she was most personally engrossed in. Like male writers of the time, she regarded love as the original fountain of energy of human beings,⁴⁷ and she was in constant search for that perfect love in her own life. More than half of her 58 poems were love poems and three of her five books were on love themes.⁴⁸ In her search for perfect love, however, she encountered numerous obstacles, in the form of the traditional family system and outdated norms, which she attacked in her writings.

Kim Iryöp felt strongly that women, like men, should have the freedom to love whomever and whenever they wanted. She attacked the traditional mores on "women's chastity" as extremely prejudicial and even humiliating to women. She spoke out openly against the rules and attitudes about women's chastity in the essay "My ideas on women's chastity," in *Shinyöja*. She observed that in the traditional way of thinking, women's chastity was treated like a thing, which could be used, soiled and discarded. "It was like some kind of gem," she wrote, "which was precious and treasured until it was used and broken, and then it was discarded without a second thought." "Chastity matters only while love exists between a man and a woman," she continued. "And when love is gone, the obligation for chastity disappears also. Just like the

feeling of love, it is constantly in flux and renewed." Chastity, in her view, was not an objective concept of ethics or morality as the society regarded it, but a passion created in the ultimate consummation of feeling and emotion between two loving persons, a man and a woman." It was a private matter of the two individuals involved.⁴⁹ She objected to calling the convention which required chastity only from women "ethics;" she saw the notion of chastity as nothing but a white-washing of love by men, who had all the freedom in the world.⁵⁰ She deplored the double standards applied to men and women.⁵¹

Kim extended her discussion of chastity to the prevailing attitude toward divorce for women and wrote the essay "Destroy the concept of virgin and non-virgin"⁵² in response to a question posed by the editors of the magazine *Sam Ch'ŏlli* (三千里 Three thousand li) on whether women should remarry. She replied that there should be no question that they should be allowed to do so and that divorced or widowed women should not be considered any less qualified for marriage than virgins. She deplored the fact that many men and even some women with modern educations considered remarriage immoral. However, she did not advocate a woman's infidelity, or remarriage immediately after her husband's death or disappearance. She suggested a minimum three-year waiting, if not a mourning, period.⁵³

Kim Iryŏp was revolutionary in her ideas on the Korean family system. Her objections to it originated in her desire to liberate women. Although she was dedicated to her own parents and wrote poems and random thought pieces eulogizing and remembering them,⁵⁴ she was opposed to the traditional family system as an institution of oppression that was most prejudicial to women and inhibited women's freedom. She even suggested—what many Koreans of the time thought about vaguely but few had the nerve to actually say—that to become a free and fulfilled human being was more important than to be either a filial child to one's parents or a dedicated parent to one's children.⁵⁵ She wrote "Death of a Girl" to contend that parents had no right to demand such sacrifices from their children.

Kim also considered freedom in love as a way for women to realize themselves as human beings. In the article, "Self-Realization," she asserted that life without love and without a loved one's understanding was devoid of human dignity and was little different from a slave's life. She maintained that having human dignity was more important than possessing wealth or material comfort. To have comfort at the price of dignity was worse than a beggar's life—it was like being somebody's possession, an appendage, a toy.⁵⁶

Kim was not alone in advocating freedom of love and freedom from the traditional family system. In fact, the issue of love was a powerful new theme

in the literature and arts of the 1920s. It was a part of the general resistance to all established values and institutions, including the custom of arranged marriage.⁵⁷ Many intellectuals, writers and artists of the time advocated freedom of love without interference from family. Yi Kwang-su was responsible for establishing love literature, which was a popular genre. But when Kim Iryöp, a female writer and a women's advocate, tried to live her life based on the ideal of love, she became the target of severe criticism.⁵⁸

An example of this is a novel by Kim Tong-in, *Kim Yön-sil chön* (Biography of Kim Yön-sil). This is supposedly a fictional biography of Kim Yön-sil, a woman writer, but it was widely known to be a composite portrait of three well-known (or notorious to men) women, the famous trio of Kim Iryöp, Kim Myöng-sun and Na Hye-sök.⁵⁹ It was the story of a modern woman writer who in her youth wrote love stories, engaged in many love affairs, abandoned her family and lived for pleasure. In the end, she accomplished nothing and had nothing—no career, no lover, no family. She could not make a living on her own, and she died alone in abject poverty and misery. The author was eerily prophetic in his predictions of the fates of two of the trio, writer Kim Myöng-sun and artist Na Hye-sök. Kim Iryöp, however, survived and carried on her work of writing, defying the prophesy of the satirical novel's author—perhaps because she chose the radically different road of becoming a Buddhist nun.

Kim Iryöp's own love life was scandalous by the standards of the time.⁶⁰ After her first marriage failed, she had at least two, possibly three, love affairs. One was with a Japanese of high social standing, and the others were with Koreans: Kuk Ki-yöl of the *Tong-a Ilbo* and a Mr. B. of the *Pulkyo Ilbo* (Buddhist daily).⁶¹ When Mr. B. forsook secular life and became a Buddhist monk, Kim was never able to overcome her feeling that she had been "abandoned." In the late 1920s, Kim Iryöp became acquainted with and lived with yet another man, Ha Yun-sik, a devout lay Buddhist who was devoted to Iryöp. She seemed finally to have found the ideal love she sought, and appeared to have led a blissful life with him.⁶² In 1928, however, she abandoned it all and "entered the mountain." It was a sensational, highly-publicized story. Many predicted that she would not last a year in the secluded mountain, but she remained a Buddhist nun for the rest of her life. Thereafter, she did not write much on women's issues. The feminist phase of her life was over, but her days as a love poet were just beginning.

Short stories

Kim Iryöp's creative pieces also appeared in *Shinyöja*. She published five poems, three short stories, and two random thought pieces there. Both random thought essays are on the death of family members, mother and sister. The three short stories are entitled: "Revelation," "Death of a Girl," and "I am Leaving." All three short stories deal with women's struggles against abusive customs. In both "Death of a Girl" and "I am Leaving," a woman either departs from this world or from the world she has become familiar with. In "Death of a Girl," the parents of Myöngsuk, the eighteen-year-old third daughter of the Cho family, force her to break off her seven-year engagement to Kim Kapsong whose family had fallen on hard times, so that she can become a concubine of a wealthy man. Myöngsuk's parents, who had already sold her two older sisters into prostitution, hoped to live comfortably off their youngest daughter. Rather than live a life without love, as a secondary wife of an elderly man, she commits suicide—knowing that it will be unfilial and bring hardship to her parents. In the last story, Kyöngja, a spoiled only child, leaves for Tokyo (as Kim Iryöp herself did) in order to get away from her stepmother, rather than be subjected to the conventional treatment of a daughter.

Altogether, Kim wrote 16 short stories as a young woman, but this genre of writing is considered her least polished. Because of the unfavorable evaluation of her short stories, she is not included among the select group of writers of the time. Critics frequently cite two reasons for this unfavorable evaluation: that her stories are didactic, and that they are obviously autobiographical. But there may be at least two other reasons: that there was a considerable gender bias against a woman writer who led what was considered to be a scandalous lifestyle and that she was less talented in story-telling than in expressing herself in poetry.

Poetry

Poetry was where Kim Iryöp's heart was and she showed great aptitude in this genre. Her life as a writer started and ended with it. She wrote 58 poems, and she considered herself as a poet although she is better remembered for other roles—feminist, essayist, reformer, Buddhist nun.

Kim Iryöp started writing poems at age 11 and continued throughout her life, writing more poetry than any other genre of writing. Her poems, like her short stories, passed through three stages: an enlightenment activist stage, the time when she was an independent writer but a forlorn woman looking for

ideal love, and finally, the period when she was a mature woman who had attained enlightenment and peace.

Her early poems reflected Kim's desire for women's self-awakening and enlightenment. A poem published in the first issue of *Shinyöja* (1920) clearly reveals her youthful activism, expressing impatience and determination to awaken women.

Do you know the secret hidden
in the unopened heart of a maiden?

Come on out,
Come on out screaming,
tearing away barriers.

Dash out, break out.
Be prepared
to welcome a beautiful new dawn.

New era, new day, and new work
all arrive together.

Kim's poetry throughout the middle and late 1920s revealed a broad spectrum of inner emotions—loneliness, agony, grief, and love—that reflect her real life before becoming a nun. From this stage of her life, she leaned toward the naturalist school. Like many of her compatriots, she was dismayed and tormented by unfulfilled love, and constantly yearned for perfect love. The titles of her love poems mirror these feelings: "One-sided love," "Farewell: I am on my way, leaving behind my lover who's become a stranger," "How shall I live alone?" "How can I forget, I cannot forget the feeling you left," "Just like the dry leaves swirling around, I am going around alone," and "Would you smile?"

In a poem called "I don't know what you are to me," Iryöp bared her heart and cried out,

I don't know what you are to me.
But I want to dedicate to you
My body while living
And my soul in death.

Why do I wish to give you
Everything nice that I see and hear?
There's no need to separate what's yours and mine

It's no use to tally gives and takes.

One body where two souls are fused...

But still, but still, ...

Endlessly I yearn.

My longing for you lingers.

I don't know what you are to me....⁶³

In this poem, one can almost hear her cry, "I don't know what you are to me, but...."

In the 1930s, after she entered the religious life, Kim began regarding loneliness as a guest who occasionally called on her, or as a gift from a former lover who had forsaken her. Obviously, the heart-wrenching loneliness which tormented her constantly at the beginning of her monastic life was only an occasional problem now. After 1932, the reader detects a subtle change. That year was the most productive year of her poetry composing, and many of the seventeen poems written that year reveal her inner tranquility. The poem titles of this time contrast sharply with the earlier ones: "Your merciful guiding hands," "This body is life's attire," "Peach blossoms smile without a sound," and "Winter mountain."

Still there remains a hint of Iryōp's lingering longing for love which she expresses in "Peach blossoms smile without a sound:"

If there's a faint shadow on the water,

Or a slight rustle, I look for you.

Peach blossoms smile—without a sound,

And plum trees bloom in the winter mountain.

Who would deny

Winter and spring are not one?

In this poem, she was at the point of overcoming persistent agony over lost love and attaining the inner peace which had remained so elusive and came to her only at the end of her life. In a poem written in 1970, the year before she died, Iryōp confessed:

Today I cannot return to youth.

This body cannot be revived.

From birth till today

I trekked rough paths
To this mountain.

Suddenly today, ...
I forget
All past troubles.

The Buddhist poet Kim Iryöp finally attained enlightenment only in the last year of her life.

CONCLUSION

Kim Iryöp's choice of topics and styles reflected Korea of the 1920s. All serious writers of both genders and both the naturalist and the enlightenment schools temporarily avoided direct confrontation with the Japanese authorities and concentrated on reform. These artists' work also expressed feelings of utter despair, abandonment, and doom—both in their own lives and in the life of their beloved homeland.

Although Kim Iryöp was undoubtedly an important woman writer of the Korean "enlightenment" period, she was overlooked by literary figures and critics of her own time.⁶⁴ During her lifetime, she was better known for her unconventional lifestyle, for her advocacy of women's liberation, and later, for being a Buddhist nun. Most significantly, no male writers either understood her and other women writers or took their talents seriously. Women writers were not included in the close-knit circles of male writers. Since her death in 1971, however, she has been regarded by Korean feminist leaders as "an ultimate hope"⁶⁵ and a model for modern Korean women, not just because of her advocacy of women's causes but because she practiced what she preached.

Kim Iryöp is finally being remembered and understood as a towering pioneer writer/poet as well as a women's advocate. There is renewed interest in her and her friends. She has recently become a subject of articles in domestic and internationally circulated newspapers and news magazines.⁶⁶ Ultimately, her relentless pursuit of her dream of living the life of a full, free human being is being given the long-overdue attention and respect it deserves. Her ideas were far ahead of her time; her solitary woman's voice was hardly listened to. But her ideas persisted in the dreams of women (and of men) who hoped to overcome the difficulties Korea faced in the early colonial period. As she expressed it in one of her poems, she was one solitary leaf, as her literary name connoted,⁶⁷ on a stream floating toward a sea, a leaf which would slowly

but surely reach the sea although torn to pieces by storms.

One small solitary leaf,
On a stormy river fallen,
To pieces torn,
Its soul will reach the vast ocean.⁶⁸

NOTES

1. A literal transliteration would be Ilyö̃p, but Iryö̃p is the style used in the Library of Congress and is used here also.
2. An expression used for becoming a Buddhist; Buddhist temples were usually located in mountains.
3. Kim Iryö̃p, *Miraese ka tahago namtorok* (Beyond the end of the future world 미래세가 다하고 남도록), 2 vols. (Seoul: Inmul Yö̃n'gusa, 1974), 2:208 (Hereafter quoted as *Miraese*).
4. If the number of eulogies is any indication of one's greatness, Kim Iryö̃p certainly ranked very high. Nearly thirty eulogies or eulogizing recollections were published in several major dailies, including the *Tong-a Ilbo* and *Han'guk Ilbo*, soon after her death in 1971. Also, a five-story pagoda was constructed at Sudöksa in her memory.
5. Woo-keun Han, *The History of Korea*, trans. Kyung-sik Lee, ed. Grafton K. Mintz (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1970), p. 487.
6. Michael Edson Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea, 1920-1925* (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press), p. 46.
7. In 1920, there were 985 Korean organizations of all types registered with the colonial police. By 1922 the number had increased to 5,728. Carter J. Eckert, Ki-baik Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson, & Edward W. Wagner, *Korea Old and New: a History* (Seoul: Ilchokak, Publishers for the Korea Institute, Harvard University, 1990), p. 286. (Hereafter quoted as Carter, *et. al.*)
8. Han, *The History*, p. 487.
9. Young-Key Kim Renaud (ed.), *King Sejong the Great* (Washington, D.C.: International Circle of Korean Linguistics), *Passim*.
10. Ch'oe Nam-sö̃n (1890-1957), the first scholar of Korean language and first to write in *han'gü̃l*. Began studying Chinese Classics and literature, but self-taught in *han'gü̃l*. From age 11, contributed articles to the *Hwangsö̃ng shinmun*. Studied at Waseda University in Japan in 1906-1907, expelled for organizing a mock national assembly, returned home, established the Shinmunkwa or the "new literature society," and started publishing *Sonyö̃n*, "Youth," a magazine which was written in *han'gü̃l*. Ch'oe was instrumental in popularizing Yi Kwang-su's

enlightenment novels. *Han'guk inmyöng taesajön* (韓國人名大辭典) (Seoul: Shinku Ch'ulp'ansa, 1967 & 1983), pp. 936-937. (Hereafter to be cited as *Inmyöng taesajön*.)

11. Yi Kwang-su (1892-?). Born in Chöng-ju, Pyöng-an Do. One of the first of the New Literature novelists. Graduated in 1910 from Meiji Academy in Japan, taught at Osan High School in Pyöngyang, returned to Japan and enrolled in the Philosophy department of Waseda University. His first novels, *Sonyön üi piae* (少年의 悲哀 "The sorrow of a young man") and *Ch'öng ch'un* (青春 "Youth"), were published. His full-length novel, *Mujöng* (無情 "Heartless"), was serialized in the *Maeil shinbo* (毎日新報 a daily newspaper), for the first time in the history of Korean newspapers and literature. In February 1919, he drafted the overseas students' version of "the declaration of independence" and left Waseda to go to Shanghai to help An Ch'ang-ho, an independence fighter, to establish the Korean Provisional Government. He returned to Korea in 1922 and published an article, "Minjok kaejo ron," (民族改造論 "Discourse on National Reconstruction"), which became the basis for his conversion to a moderate stance, working within the colonial framework to prepare Korea for eventual independence. *Inmyöng taesajön*, p. 599. Beongcheon Yu, *Han Yong-un and Yi Kwang-su: Two Pioneers of Modern Korean Literature* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), *Passim*.
12. Kevin O'Rourke, "The Korean Short Stories of the 1920's and Naturalism," *Korea Journal*, (17:3, March 1977, 48-63), p. 50.
13. O'Rourke, *Ibid*.
14. See note 11 above.
15. My emphasis.
16. O'Rourke, p. 51.
17. Kim Tong-in (1900-1951), was a native of Pyöngyang, educated at Meiji Academy and Kawabata Fine Arts Academy of Japan. Returning to Korea in 1919, he published *Ch'angjo*, the first Korean literary magazine, and his first novel, "Sorrows of a weak person." Accused of violating the publication law of the Japanese colonial government, he was jailed for four months. He wrote numerous historical novels and fictions, some of which were serialized in the *Chosön Ilbo*, but was perennially plagued with poverty. In addition to fiction writing, he was a high profile literary critic. Kim Tong-in was also known for his research on Yi Kwang-su, his contemporary and a famous literary figure. *Inmyöng taesajön*, p. 93.
18. O'Rourke, *Ibid*.
19. O'Rourke, pp. 53-61.
20. O'Rourke, p. 61.
21. These two, together with Kim Iryöp, formed a trio of writer/artists who were on the frontline of women advocates for reform. (Sung Rak-hi, "On Kim Ilyöp's Literature," *Journal of Asian women* [17 (December 19-8): 307-326]. Kim

- Myŭng-sun is also known by the name, Kim Yŏn-sil. Na Hye-Sŏk was better known as an artist.
22. Yi, Myŏng-on, Hŏllŏ kan yŏinsang (홀리칸 女人像, Portrait of women of the past) (Seoul: Inkansa, 1958), p. 25.
 23. Bonnie Oh, "From Three Obediences to Patriotism and Nationalism: Women's Studies in Korea Up To 1945," *Korea Journal* (22:7), July 1982, pp. 37-55.
 24. This group included many who became famous leaders in various fields in post-1945 Korea. Just to name two, there are Helen (Hwalan) Kim, a long-time president of Ewha Woman's University and Pak In-duk, the founder of Induk Technical Institute.
 25. William R. Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 3-4. The most characteristic attitude was liberalism, which emphasized the immanence of God in human nature, which in turn tended toward general humanistic optimism.
 26. Kim Iryŏp, *Miraese*, 2:208.
 27. Her book, *Ch'ŏngch'un ul pul sarugo* (Abandoning youth), (Seoul: Munsonkak, 1962) was a best seller.
 28. By 1910, the year of Japanese annexation of Korea, over 60 (63-66) private schools for girls were established. Only one school, established in 1908, was a public school. Han'guk yŏsŏngsa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏn hoe, *Han'guk yŏsŏng sa* (韓國女性史, History of Korean women), 2 vols. (Seoul: Ewha University Press, 1972), 2:133-137. (Hereafter to be quoted as *Yŏsŏngsa*.)
 29. Sung, "Kim Ilyŏp." p. 310.
 30. As for the number of Wŏn-ju's siblings, there is considerable dispute. *Ibid.*
 31. Yi Myŏng-on, *Hŭllŏ kan*, pp. 28-30.
 32. *Ch'ŏngch'un*, p. 46. Wŏn-ju's mother's family was very wealthy, although her mother was married off at age seventeen to a poor, widowed Christian, because Wŏn-ju's grandparents thought their daughter was getting too old to be properly married.
 33. *Ibid.*
 34. *Yŏsŏngsa*, 2:373.
 35. From this point onward, she proudly used this literary name only, which Yi Kwang-su gave her. Yi was an idol among women writers and with whom Iryŏp had reportedly been secretly in love.
 36. Much later, it became known that it was during this time that she gave birth to a son born of a wealthy Japanese man of high social standing, which she kept in secret except among a small circle of friends and relatives. This son, Kim T'ae-shin, who also became a monk later in his life and whose existence had been hidden from the public, emerged in 1990 with his first book, *Tugo kan chŏng: Iryŏp-Ildang shi-hwa jip* (鄭一葉 一堂 詩畫集 The feelings left behind: A collection of poems and paintings by Iryŏp and Ildang), Seoul: Koryŏ Wŏn, 1990.

He quickly followed it with his second work, *Rahŭla ũi samokok* (라홀라의 思母曲 *Rahŭla's* love odes for mother), 2 vols. Seoul: Hankilsa, 1991. In both of these works, Kim T'ae-shin describes in detail his yearning for a mother whom he could not call mother.

37. For this reason—that her writing was not genuinely literary—she was not included among the serious writers of her time. Sung Rak-hi, *Kim Ilyöp*, pp. 307-308.
38. A piece published in *Sam Ch'olli* magazine (三千里 Three thousand li, November, 1937) discussed the question of how long a woman should wait to get remarried after her husband's death. Iryöp urged that a widow should wait a minimum of three years. *Miraese*, 2:196.
39. *Miraese*, 2:162-163.
40. *Ibid.*, 2:169-170 (April 6, 1920).
41. *Miraese*, 2:180; *Shinyöja*, June 1920; *Pyeho*, No. 2, 1921.
42. "Remaking and liberation of women," *Miraese*, 2:164-165.
43. *Ibid.*, 2:165.
44. *Ibid.*, 2:178-181 (June 1920).
45. *Miraese*, 2:168.
46. *Miraese*, 2:170-171; *Tong'a Ilbo*, April 6, 1920.
47. *Miraese*, 2:229.
48. Kim Iryöp, *Ch'öngch'un ul pul sarugo* p. 45.
49. *Miraese*, 2:156-157.
50. Sung Rak-hi, "Kim Ilyöp," *JAW*, p. 308.
51. *Tong'a Ilbo*, June 6, 1926.
52. *Miraese*, 2:194-195.
53. *Ibid.*, 2:196-197 (reprinted from *Sam Ch'ölli*, November, 1937).
54. *Ibid.*, 1:406 (reprinted from *Tong'a Ilbo*, January 1, 1925); *Ibid.*, 1:410 (*Tong'a ji* [東亞誌, *Tong'a* magazine], March 1933); *Ibid.*, 1:389 (*Shin kajöng ji* [新家庭誌, *New home* magazine], May 1933, January 1938).
55. *Miraese*, 1:160; *Tong'a Ilbo*, June 19, 26, 1926.
56. *Miraese*, 2:174; *Shinyöja*, May 1920.
57. Paek Chöl, *Shin munhak*, pp. 123-124.
58. Yi Myöng-on, *Hüllö kan*, p. 25.
59. Sung Rak-hi, "Kim Iryöp," pp. 307-326.
60. See above, Note #36.
61. I have not been able to track down who this person was.
62. Iryöp said she was married to Mr. Ha, who, because of his profound faith in Buddhism, was not violent like other men she had known, was charitable, gentle and kind. She later wrote in *Sudök sa* that her love for Mr. Ha delayed her entry to Buddhist religious life. *Sudök sa*, pp. 49-50. Yi Myöng-on, *Hüllö kan yoin-sang*, pp. 37-39.
63. This was composed in April, 1928 and is her last poem before leaving the secu-

- lar life in July 1928. Kim T'ae-shin, *Tugokan chŏng*, p. 91.
64. Sung Rak-hi, "Kim Ilyŏp," *JAW*, p. 308.
65. Im Chung-sam, "Kim Ilyŏp ron [金一葉論, On Kim Ilyŏp], *Sudŏk sa*, p. 10.
66. Yoon Kyong-hee, "Three Pioneering Modern Writers," *Korea Newsreview* (Seoul: *The Korea Herald*, February 22, 1992), p. 30.
67. Im Chung-sam, "Kim Iryŏp ron," p. 10.
68. *Tangsin un*, p. 14. My translation.

Selected Translations from the Poetry of Kim Iryŏp

by *Sang Ran Lee and S.E. Solberg*

1. A LEAF

A frail leaf falls
in the middle of the rapids;
battered there, and torn,
still,
its spirit
reaches out for the great sea.

2. A LITTLE POEM

Things have shadows and
sounds reveal my beloved;
peach blossoms laugh soundlessly, and,
plums flower in the winter mountain.
Who's to deny that
Spring, Winter are all the same?

Pulgi 2962 (1932)

To Mangong Great Master

3. WHAT ARE YOU TO ME?

After all,
 what are you to me that
 I should want to offer up to you
 while I live, this my body,
 once I die, even my soul?

Why should I yield every choice thing I see,
 hear, think, all to you?
 There's no way to tell what's yours, what mine.
 Is there a moment to tally terms and returns?

Souls come together in one body, but still ...

Still, still
 nothing more
 than a sense of something wanting....
 After all, what are you to me?

4. TO YOU

My fragile soul
 believes what you say, and
 knows not where to go
 except as my weary, leaden steps
 lead me—
 When will I see you?

Your call for me,
 a thousand? ten thousand years ago?
 The instant I sense your words
 it is as if I saw you.
 Even in the transport of my play,
 when I look back, I am there.

5. YOUR HANDS

Everything between heaven and earth
is in your hands.

“Take them, take them,”
you shouted, but,
blinded and deafened, human kind
only pawed the air.

6. FALLING LEAVES

1.

The fruit is finely shaped
and hidden deep among the leaves;
cut free from your old home,
you, pretty flower,
flew round, and yet again, around—
to me you seemed a butterfly.

1932/6 *Pulgyo*

2.

As you flew round and round, you seemed a butterfly, but
you were the petal at the very tip of the branch cradling
your infant against the tug of wind that,
circling round the sky, took your modest leave.

7. UNTITLED

When I consider things of the world
 they are only idle dreams.
 This life's breath of me, dream of a dream—
 how much of that must I believe?
 To master the great truth
 mind only springs alone.

1932/11/12 *Pulgyo*

8. WHILE LOOKING UP AT THE PENDULUM

Night, day, invariably back and forth,
 always that only, always repeating, pendulum life
 just so far, then back, back just so far, then the same spot and yet,
 in spite of all still thinks it goes all on its own
 keeping up that stern front, no rest through life;
 Dare I mock this pendulum huffing and puffing its way through life?
 Am I not always merely going, coming in that time too,
 yet sensing that time passes? Setting past apart from present
 I grow older each day,
 grow old, die, and die to be born only to grow old again:
 am I not the eternal wanderer?

1933/7 *Pulgyo*

9. PLEASE SMILE AT ME

1.

Your body crushed next to my heart,
 your lips taking my heart's breath away.
 Weren't these all within the narrow confines
 of my breast?
 And yet, and yet
 I didn't even know
 The heavens had watched Time enfolding your beautiful shapes
 climb the clay back wall and leave.

Wasn't it Time that came and suddenly snatched away
 your soul and mine as well?
 Time that snatches away now this, now that
 from any and everyone throughout eternity,
 yet never even once appears to human eyes.

Even so, please smile at me
 and I too will try to keep on smiling.

(Upon departing from one I met)

2.

Within the narrow confines of my breast,
 Your body crushed next to my heart,
 Your eyes and gaze that take my breath away,
 and yet no part of you conquered.
 And yet, and yet, when was it?
 Even the chair where you sat,
 the place where you worked,
 your scent, your footprint,
 all vanished from sight.

Embracing the package of your many shapes
 wrapped with empty space,
 the shape of disappearing Time's back

truly cannot be seen.
 Even so people
 from far in the past
 say the thing they have never seen
 is the substance of time.
 Then isn't it
 that before long
 in one way or the other
 your body and mine
 will be taken away by Time?
 At that moment, please smile at me.

10. I

Since I am not all existence
 then who are the others (are not me)?
 When I claim that I am I
 everyone else also claims to be "I."
 Although you and I are not two
 When I call there is an answer.

11. I ALONE

Since the four seasons were all the same
 that year
 the thought came of itself
 New Years, make a New Year's offering.
 Even though it was I alone
 it was empty freedom.

(Scolding for the speech, "this is me, is that you?")

1967/12/27

12. THREE MEDITATION POEMS

1. Self

I have given my self away
and wandered doing only what others say.
People and their words,
As if we do not see each other
And while there are no shapes to be seen,
Firmly stand still.

(10th anniversary of Meditation)

2. Discard the Old and Meet the New

Since time doesn't exist,
how can we say "new year," "old year"?
Thought moves,
coming and going
Only in me is there time or space.
Know yourself.

*(Outside the Meditation Hall gate: who has made the big leap?)
(Welcoming the year 1957)*

3. Single Thought

That times of a thousand kalpas ago and
things of ten thousand kalpas to follow
are set in order by a single thought
makes the whole universe me.
Nature of itself was born
to accept me.

(on my birthday, 1957)

At the Abbey in Ch'ungham, Kyongsung
Kim-Iryöp

13. IN THE MEDITATION HALL

Awakened from slumber by the clap of the master,
 novices fill the hall; the master descends from the altar.
 On the three-tiered altar, candle lights flutter.
 Flowers break out in laughter and incense fills the hall.
 Laws of mind and mind, thing and thing,
 the master's sermon is over.
 Why does the master push us into
 further confusion?
 Storm, pound his fist, thunder, awaken us?

—*Novice 49th Day Master's Preaching.*

14. SONG FOR FORGETTING MEMORY

Time goes and comes of itself.
 Space likewise turns by itself.
 Time and space together are within my ambit,
 Humbly deferring to propriety.
 Nevertheless this harmonious laughter
 sounds from eternity.

15. COLOR OF SOUND

from my sickbed

In the sound of water there is a river,
 in the sight of blue, waves.
 Sound of water, color of waves
 are one—who doesn't know that?
 Since the sound of water is like that,
 how can sound and color be two?

16. THE DAY THAT NEVER RETURNS

Queca Mi —on my 75th birthday

Today will never return in my life.
 Eternity will never yield back this body of mine.
 From birth to now I clambered rough mountains.
 Today suddenly, I can forget old cares.

(1970) 4th month, 28th day

Queen Mi was the wife of the 26th King of the Yi Dynasty, Koryŏng (1418). During the twenty years from 1374 till 1393, she was the most powerful person in the dynasty, and still we can see her's independent figure of the late Yi period. Usually chronicles told about queen's duty in connection with such official occasions as, weddings, the hearing of royal oracles.

Little was known of her mother, but how she spent her childhood, the cause of her parents' early deaths. Her real name, whose never say, was 'The Young' (20), 'Purple Beauty'. But after she was taken in wedding to a Prince's marriage she was simply called 'daughter of Mr. Chi' (21), and after she became queen, she was called 'The Purple Majesty' (22), and her death she was called by a posthumous name, 'Myungmyung' (23).

"A politician who deceived Korea, China, and Japan," "the woman who planned to eject the Japanese from the Korean peninsula by making an alliance with Korea," "the most politically influential woman ever produced by the Yi Dynasty," these are only a few of the opinions of her abroad. Even her enemy, Japanese Chŏn Injun, who played a big role in her assassination, said, "Her Majesty has few equals among her contemporaries for shrewdness and sagacity. In the art of conciliating her enemies and securing the confidence of her servants she has no equal."

In Korea the opinion of Queen Mi varied in different periods. In the 1930s many intellectuals, for example Chŏn Byŏng Ik (24), considered her "an embodiment of all the evils of the decaying dynasty." One could not find the Queen in the list of the most important personalities of Korean history. Until recently people avoided even speaking about her, as "she had dealt too much with foreigners and ruined the country." Only in the last two or three years has the attitude toward Queen Mi's activities gradually

Queen Min of Korea: Coming to Power*

By Tatiana M. Simbirtseva

Queen Min was the wife of the 26th King of the Yi Dynasty, Kojong (高宗). During the twenty years, from 1874 till 1895, she was the most powerful person in the country, and still we can call her a mysterious figure of the late Yi period. Usually chronicles told about queens only in connection with such official occasions as marriages, the bearing of royal children.

Little was known of her mother, nor how she spent her childhood, nor the cause of her parents' early deaths. Her real name, some novels say, was 'Cha Young' (紫英), "Purple Beauty," but there are no facts to confirm this. Before marriage she was simply called 'daughter of Min Chi Rok (閔致祿),' and after she became queen, she was called 'Her Palace Majesty (중정마마)'; after her death she was called by a posthumous name, 'Myongsong hwanhu (明成皇后).'

"A politician who deceived Russia, China, and Japan," "the woman who planned to eject the Japanese from the Korean peninsula by making an alliance with Russia,"¹ "the most politically influential woman ever produced by the T. Dynasty,"² these are only a few of the opinions of her abroad. Even her enemy, Japanese Count Inoue, who played a big role in her assassination, said, "Her Majesty has few equals among her countrymen for shrewdness and sagacity. In the art of conciliating her enemies and winning the confidence of her servants she has no equal."³

In Korea the opinion of Queen Min varied in different periods. In the 1950s many intellectuals, for example historian Choe Byong Ik (최병익), considered her "an embodiment of all the evils of the decaying dynasty." One could not find the Queen in the list of the most important personalities of Korean history. Until recently people avoided even speaking about her, as "she had dealt too much with foreigners and ruined the country"⁴ Only in the last two or three years has the attitude toward Queen Min's activities suddenly

changed. This is undoubtedly connected with the policy of globalization proclaimed by Kim, Young Sam's government and the improvement in relations with Russia. Queen Min became a main character in a big musical. Many films praising her as an exemplary Mother of the Country are shown on Korean TV, and newspapers have been publishing novels about her. She is becoming a new banner of Korean nationalism, a means of propaganda, and thus her image and real role in Korean history are becoming even more vague. The purpose of this article is to introduce some facts about the Queen and the author's personal opinion of this woman, who was simultaneously a very typical and a very unusual representative of Korean traditional society.

Queen Min's visage is hidden from history. The supposed photographs of the Queen deliver only the image of an enigma. One of them was published in Hulbert's *The Passing of Korea in 1905*, entitled 'A palace woman in full regalia'; the second, in the book *The Spirit of Independence* by the first Korean president, Syngman Rhee, written in 1906 and published in San-Fransisco in 1920. There are, however, many objections to these alleged portraits of the Queen. For example, as Nah, Hong Ju writes in his book *Critics of Assassination of Queen Min*,⁵ "even now it is difficult to imagine an intelligent woman having pictures taken while placing her feet apart. It is even more difficult to imagine that a Korean queen, Mother of the Country, who traditionally followed all the rules of the court and exercised Confucian manners to the greatest extent, would have had a picture taken in such a posture."⁶ Faces of kings and queens were always concealed from the public. Nobody was allowed to see their majesties' images, and not a single artist was considered excellent enough to depict their dignity and perfection.

Koreans got to know about photographs for the first time in 1876 when *tangsang* (official with the rank above upper senior third grade) Kim, Gee Sue (김기수) went to Japan with an official mission after the conclusion of the Kanhwa Treaty.⁷ Those, who support the idea that the portrait in Syngman Rhee's book is that of Queen Min, insist that it was taken in 1882, during the Imo revolt. That is why, they claim, the Queen is seen in a common woman's dress,⁸ but traditions usually begin to fade not from above but from the bottom. It is difficult to imagine that in 1882, the Korean queen only six years after photographs had become known in the country and desperately seeking for a shelter, surrounded with spies who were sent to kill her, would have found time to pose for pictures in such unsuitable dress.

Sunoda Fusako, relying on Korean historian Synn, Gee Sue (신기수), writes that there was one more photograph of Queen Min made by a Japanese who had his studio in the royal palace and that this photograph was used by

the assassins to identify the Queen.⁹ Eyewitnesses to the drama, which took place in Kyongbok Palace on October 8th, 1895, such as a Russian architect Seredin-Sabatin, made it clear, however, that several court ladies were killed on that early morning only because the assassins did not know exactly what the Queen did look like.¹⁰ Besides, the Queen was strongly anti-Japanese, the main reason for her death, and certainly would not have used the services of a Japanese photographer.

Sometimes Koreans say that all the photographs of the Queen were destroyed by the Japanese, but it seems that there were no photographs of her at all. Lilius Underwood, an American missionary, who came to Korea in 1888, was appointed the Queen's doctor and enjoyed her full trust and intimate friendship, left very sincere and vivid descriptions of the Queen:

"I wish I could give the public a true picture of the queen as she appeared at her best, but this would be impossible, even had she permitted a photograph to be taken, for her charming play of expression while in conversation, the character and intellect which were then revealed, were only half seen when the face was in repose. She wore her hair like all Korean ladies, parted in the center, drawn tightly and very smoothly away from the face and knotted rather low at the back of the head. A small ornament... was worn on the top of the head fastened by a narrow black band. Her majesty seemed to care little for ornaments, and wore very few. No Korean women wear earrings, and the queen was no exception, nor have I ever seen her wear a necklace, a brooch, or a bracelet. She must have had many rings, but I never saw her wear more than one or two of European manufacture... According to Korean custom, she carried a number of filigree gold ornaments decorated with long silk tassels fastened at her side. So simple, so perfectly refined were all her tastes in dress, it is difficult to think of her as belonging to a nation called half civilized... Slightly pale and quite thin, with somewhat sharp features and brilliant piercing eyes, she did not strike me at first sight as being beautiful, but no one could help reading force, intellect and strength of character in that face..."¹¹

It seems that Mrs. Underwood's description is the most reliable portrait of the Queen available. Very specific Korean traditions concerning women leave no doubt about it. Here is an abstract from *Korea and Her Neighbours* by British traveller and writer Isabella Bishop, who visited Korea several times between 1890 and 1896.

"Korean women are very rigidly secluded, perhaps more absolutely so than the women of any other nation. In the capital a very curious arrangement prevailed. About eight o'clock the great bell tolled a signal for men to retire into their houses, and for women to come out and amuse themselves... The rule

which clears the streets of men occasionally lapses, and then some incident occurs which causes it to be rigorously reinforced. So it was at the time of my arrival, and the pitch dark streets presented the singular spectacle of being tenanted solely by bodies of women with servants carrying their lanterns... At twelve the bell again boomed, women retired, and men were at liberty to go abroad. A lady of high position told me that she had never seen the streets of Seoul by daylight"¹²

The Queen, being at the top of the social pyramid, had to endure such restrictions to the extreme degree. For example, Korean doctors, always men, who treated the queen, "felt" her pulse by using a cord, one end of which was fastened about her wrist, and the other, which was carried into the next room, was held in the doctor's fingers. The royal tongue was extended through a slit in a screen for the physician's observation.¹³ The above mentioned examples prove that it would be somewhat naive to believe in the existence of photographs of Queen Min. The era of the photograph came to the royal palace after her death, when the conservatives, whom she had led, lost their influence, reforms increased and traditions hundreds of years old began to retreat under the pressure of the temptations of Western civilization.

The Queen belonged to a noble family. There is only one Min clan in Korea in contrast to Kims, Parks, or Yis. The clan originated in Kyongi Province in Yoju-gun(驪州). Queen Min was born there on the 25th of September, 1851, and lost both her parents when she was eight. There had been two other queens from this family: the first, the wife of the third king of the Yi Dynasty, Taejong(太宗 1401-1418), and the second the wife of the 19th king, Sukjǒng(瀟宗 1675-1720). The clan had boasted many highly positioned bureaucrats in its illustrious past, but by the time Queen Min was born, the clan found itself battling poverty, and was completely without influence. During more uneventful eras such an impotent clan would never have bred a queen, but the political situation in which Korea found itself then, provided the very specific catalyst for the Min clan's being raised to royal stature once more.

Power had been almost universally seized in the beginning of the 19th century by the tyrannical Andong Kims, a clan which had provided several queens. The social stagnation that resulted was a breeding ground for unrest. Corruption and embezzlement from the treasury were taken to extreme levels, and the inevitable exploitation that resulted, reached staggering proportions. One rebellion after another was accompanied by natural disasters. Indeed it was one of the most gloomy periods in the country's history.

Only the goal of preserving influence existed for the Andong Kims. Their fierce campaign to dominate the royal house had led to a situation in which almost all the representatives of the royal family fled from Seoul. When the Yi royal family produced intelligent and appropriate candidates for appointment as kings, they were either accused of treason and executed or sent into exile, so when king Hönjong(憲宗 1835-1849) died leaving no son, no one acceptable could be found to succeed to the throne. After a long search the future king, Chölchong(哲宗 1850-1863), was found on Kanghwa Island where his family had fled to hide from oppression.

When envoys arrived on Kanghwa Island to seek out the heir, they found the remaining Yi clan barely surviving in wretched poverty. Chölchong was proclaimed King amidst degradation and poverty. Though from the start of the dynasty Korean kings had given top priority to the education of their sons, the new King could not read a single word on the notice delivering congratulations to him on his elevation to the royal throne. Although Chölchong ruled the country for thirteen years, until his last days he had not yet learned how to move with dignity or to wear royal clothes, so that even in the most luxurious robes he looked like a fisherman. For the Andong Kims, Chölchong was an excellent choice. They married him to one of their daughters. His illiteracy made him manipulatable and vulnerable to their control.

All this has been stated to set the stage for the appearance of a man who also could never have made his entrance in a more stable period: namely Yi, Ha Ung(李晁應), afterwards known in Korean history as the Taewongun(大院君), or Great Prince. Amidst the decay and despoilment of his clan that surrounded and shaped his early life, he rose to become one of the most powerful despots of the Korean state, and was known for his severe rule (1864-1874).¹⁴ Yi Ha Ung's grandfather was a younger brother of King Chöngjo(正祖 1777-1800), so his blood connections with the royal family were without doubt. It is quite difficult to imagine that during the 1850s this future tyrant spent his time sitting in cheap drinking-houses for the lower class, singing songs with them, and not deeming it a low thing to attend a peasant's marriage ceremony, and to sing at the request of the guests, because he had a good voice. He was licentious in his affairs with women, infamous for scandalous behaviour. To intensify his image as a hapless ne'er-do-well, he frequently visited houses of Kim clan members, appearing as a beggar asking for hand-outs. Strange and unprecedented was the behaviour of this representative of the royal family, considering the Confucian directive hallowing the importance of one's public image. It is suspected that all this was done for protection, lest the Andong Kims ever imagine that behind the face of a drunken clown was concealed an

ambitious tiger.

The Taewongun was well aware of who would be the one to choose the heir-apparent upon the death of King Cholchong. Her name was Dowager Queen Cho (趙大王大妃) from the Pung-yang (풍양) Cho clan.

Various ranks of queens resided within the palace. Kings generally lived short lives. Of the twenty-seven kings of the Yi Dynasty only twelve lived to see their 40s and only five lived to 60, so their mothers and wives remained as dowagers and members of the court. Old Queen Cho was the wife of the heir to the throne, a son of the 23rd king, Sunjo (純祖 1801-1834), who died before he became king. Being the oldest, it was her right to appoint the heir in case Cholchong died. As the Andong Kims had reduced her own clan to a forgotten status, she dreamed of revenge, and the Taewongun realized it. He cleverly approached the two young nephews of this woman and revealed his plan to make his second son, Lee Myong Bok (李命福), king. He assured them that above all he desired to see an end to the rule of the Andong Kims who had disgraced the ruling dynasty. It happened that even his very reputation for philandering made a poor impression on the court ladies who certainly had heard about him.

These were the first strains of the overture heard as King Kojong entered the arena of the royal Korean court. The symphony of events that followed were the sudden death in 1863 of King Cholchong, who left no heir, and the decision taken at the subsequent meeting, called by old Queen Cho, of all the top administrators of the court. The death of the king came so suddenly, and old Cho acted so quickly, that the Andong Kims could not offer a mutually satisfactory choice. Yi Myong Bok was proclaimed the new king. He was twelve years old.

The story runs that when the messengers from the palace arrived to announce to Yi Myong Bok his elevation to the royal throne, they found him playing in the backyard with some very common children. The dilapidation that surrounded them was personified by a fence full of holes, through which every neighbour gazed when the procession entered the confines of the garden, but these holes did not discourage Yi Ha Ung, who met them as though he had already become a high and dignified personage. From this point on his elevation to great power came quickly.

Though he was small of stature, he spoke well and convincingly, and possessed a strong will, sharp wit, and an excellent education. He proceeded as if to the manor born, and somehow his haughtiness and authoritarian demeanor was never questioned. This charisma of his had its effect on anyone with

whom he came into contact. As father of the king, he was granted the honorary title of the Taewongun. Although old Cho was officially the regent (she was regent until 1866), she entrusted all the power to the Taewongun and he faithfully fulfilled his promises to her. Her relatives were promoted while she herself was surrounded with great respect. The Taewongun immediately instituted reforms, the purpose of which was to revive the glory of the first kings of the dynasty. The Andong Kims were either executed or sent into exile. To underline the prestige of royal power, the Taewongun began to rebuild Kyongbok Palace, which had lain in ruins since the Japanese invasion at the end of the 16th century. It was an enormous burden on the state treasury, so the regent began to sell positions to get the required money. When all the existing positions had been sold, he invented different taxes, which were ruinous for the people. Thus with favouritism, corruption, and the elimination of enemies increasing, Korean court history began to find its level once again in the government of the Taewongun, and the stage was finally set for the entrance of Queen Min.

When King Kojong reached the age of fifteen, his father decided it was time for him to be married. He was diligent in finding a queen without close relatives, who would harbour political ambitions, yet with noble lineage, in order to justify his choice to the court and the people. Candidates were rejected one by one, until the wife of the Taewongun proposed a bride from her own clan. His wife's description of the girl was quite persuasive: orphaned, beautiful of face, healthy in body, level of education no less than of the most noble in the country. The first meeting of the proposed bride with the Taewongun was easily arranged as she lived in the neighborhood in Anguk-dong.

This meeting finished successfully, and in 1866 on the 20th of March by the lunar calendar, a wedding took place in the Injŏngjŏn Pavilion (인정전) of Changdŏk Palace (창덕궁). In a coronation ceremony the girl became the Korean queen. It is known that the wig which was usually worn by royal brides at weddings was so heavy that a tall court lady was specially assigned to support it from the back. This ceremony had hardly finished, when another three-day ceremony for the reverencing of ancestors started. We can only imagine how difficult it would have been for a fifteen year old girl having neither father nor brothers for support to endure such ceremonies without breathing the slightest complaint. We can suppose that from an early age she was determined to steel herself with iron patience in the face of all problems, and overcome all obstacles with dignity.

Her efforts, however, did not touch the heart of the young king. To use a

Korean expression, for more than five years she 'guarded an empty room(빈 방을 지켰습니다).'¹⁵ That means that the king paid no attention to her as a woman. In this also the young queen demonstrated the poised quietness and ability to behave that she evidenced during the first tiresome ceremonies. She learned from experienced court ladies, carefully acquiring the behaviour necessary to a queen, and spent all her time practicing her new skills without the smallest deviation. She became expert at obeying every restriction of the court and never showing anyone distress or anxiety over anything. She was respectful to her in-laws, kind to the servants, and eventually won the praise of all.

Her free time was devoted entirely to reading. These were very special books usually read by high-ranking officials: *Springs and Autumns* (春秋) and *Notes of a Chwa on Springs and Autumns* (춘추좌씨전). These were the chronicles of the No (魯) Kingdom in China from the 8th century BC through the 3rd century AD. Of course, she did not read such dry and tedious books simply to combat loneliness. Many observers suppose that through these first years Queen Min was watching her husband, studying his character, and trying to find a way in. She discovered that while Kojong was king, he did not possess any real power, but that his father was the real ruler, and that his son was afraid of him.

He had not a single friend or counselor. The officials around him did only what they were told. The queen soon came to the conclusion that her husband needed a partner, a confidant. She was sure that the day would come when she herself could become this confidant and her husband's love would be secured. There were many women around the king, but she could do nothing about it. She knew that there were seven 'evils' (ch'ilgo chiak), or seven conditions for expelling a wife according to Confucian teachings. Divorce was socially accepted if the wife was guilty of one of the following: disobeying parents-in-law, bearing no son, committing adultery, jealousy, carrying a hereditary disease, garrulousness, and larceny.¹⁶

Another Queen Min, the wife of the 19th king, invoked a powerful curse on an heir who was born to one of the palace concubines. For this she was in exile for six years. The wife of the ninth king was sent to a far island for jealousy, and there poisoned, so Queen Min saw to it that her behaviour betrayed not a trace of jealousy. Very early on, she understood the palace to be a battlefield, and launching her desperate yet meticulous campaign, she mused upon different ways of becoming victorious in the struggle.

Soon she received a shattering blow. One of the palace women bore the King's first son. The blow was even more bitter as that woman was not even of noble origin. There were many noble women in the palace. They were

called *naemyong-bu* (內命婦) and were divided into seven ranks. Women who were not noble were called *nae-in* (內人). These came to the palace early in childhood, and did the washing, cleaning, and sewing. After thirty five years of service, they received the title of fifth rank *sanggun* (상궁). If a woman, who was not noble, received special attention from the king, she could receive the title of special *sangung* (특별상궁). The woman who bore king Kojong's first son was a special *sangung* named Lee, Youngbodan (the name of the pavilion where she lived), and her son was named Wanhwagun (完和君).¹⁷

Nobody knows what the feelings of the Queen were upon receiving such devastating news, but it is known that the next day she sent a very expensive gift to the new mother, as if showing that 'joy for the king is joy for the queen.' Then during some official ceremony, with a happy face she congratulated the king. No doubt, he was surprised by such unusual behaviour. It is difficult to be sure, but Sunoda presumes that this was the starting point in the new relationship of the royal couple, and at the same time the beginning of the Queen's feud with the Taewongun, which lasted to the end of their lives and influenced many events and the policy of the country.¹⁸ The Taewongun was very glad that a grandson had been born and frequented the palace to see the boy. The Queen saw this as a direct insult to her. Also, the Taewongun possessed enough power to make this illegal son a legal heir. The new baby was a danger for Queen Min. The thoughts that were born in her head at that moment became reality ten years later when Wanhwagun suddenly died in unknown circumstances.

The Queen waited patiently for the time of her triumph, and at last it came. In 1871 she became pregnant. She was already 20, and it was her sixth year in the palace. She remembered too well that the women not able to bear a son were expelled from the palace and she prayed to the Spirit of the Mountains and invited many shamans to the palace. During her pregnancy the Taewongun sent her a large amount of wild ginseng. The roots were considered the best medicine and were so expensive that if somebody found one, he could support his family for a year on the price it would bring. The Queen may have hated her father-in-law, but she ate the roots with great pleasure every day, hoping to assure a healthy birth.

On the 9th of November she delivered a boy, but he had a gastric problem. The Taewongun and the Queen had opposing opinions as to how the child should be treated. While they were arguing, the child died. Her despair knew no bounds. In her heart she blamed the Taewongun for the death of her son, claiming that he had purposely sent her too much ginseng. In order to 'quiet the spirit' of her child, Queen Min ordered many pompous ceremonies

to be held in the palace. She invited several hundred shamans, who were to sing his spirit to the other world for ten days straight. Then there was a very elaborate *chesa* ceremony to give 'self-assurance' to the spirit. Thousands of Buddhist monks of Kumgansan and the Chirisan Mountains were ordered to pray for several days without cease. All this became an extreme burden on the exhausted treasury. At the same time, the Queen ordered the shamans to discover who was guilty in the death of the child. They brought back the verdict that it was malicious activity on the part of Chang *sangung* and Lee *sangung*, the mother of that first son, Wanhwagun. Lee managed to escape execution, but the other woman was executed after horrific tortures. That was the price she paid for the king's attention.

The system of secondary wives had always existed in the court. And nobody was surprised if some of the court ladies or servants bore a child. But Queen Min did not think it was to be tolerated. From 1877 when a Chang bore a third son to Kojong, Uihwagun (의화군). For all the 18 years the Queen reigned in the palace, the king did not father a single offspring from the ladies of the court. Two years after Queen Min's death Lady Om bore a son for him, and a lady called Poknyondan bore the final offspring, princess Tökhye (덕혜).

When Kojong became twenty, he began to long for the power he should have as king, but he feared confrontation with his father, and was insecure about his ability to lead the country. The strong-willed Queen played a central role in the take-over of power. She managed to unite all the Min clan. By 1874 some thirty representatives of the clan were established in strategic positions of power. At first their anti-Taewongun movement could not be seen from the outside. Simply, noblemen who had lived in poverty, or even the Taewongun's close relatives, neglected by the regent, began to receive signs of affection from the Queen. They were becoming the stone that she was preparing to throw at her father-in-law. For example, the elder brother of the regent Lee Ch'oe Ung (李最應), who had been living for many years without any favours from the court, was easily swayed by the honours he was being suddenly offered by the Queen. He became one of the most faithful servants of Her Majesty, and when Kojong came to power was appointed prime-minister. The Taewongun's elder son, Lee Jae Myon (李載冕), called block-head by his father was also successfully cajoled by the Min clan. Later, when the Taewongun fell from power, Lee Jae Myon was appointed to watch his father and to inform the court about his behaviour. Thus he became a spy in his own family.

Many prominent Confucian scholars were also attracted to the Queen's

party. During the Choson period there was a law according to which anybody could address the king with a letter. On the 25th of October, 1873, one of the leaders of the leading philosophical trend - *wijong choksa* - Ch'oe Ik Hyön (崔益絃) sent a letter to Kjong and accused the Taewongun of lack of virtue, which caused great trouble for the people. The King was very pleased with the letter and appointed Ch'oe to a high position. The Taewongun wanted to punish Ch'oe and ordered the ministers of the right and of the left to write letters, denouncing his activity, but on the 3rd of November Ch'oe wrote one more letter: "The Taewongun is the father of the King, and it is the law to respect him, but he can't rule the country forever. The King has grown up and must take his throne himself." The Taewongun sent secret killers to Ch'oe, but Kjong immediately sent the philosopher into exile on Chejudo and ordered many people to guard him. It was done to save Ch'oe from the regent's anger.

On the 5th of November Kjong issued a proclamation stating that he had taken the reins into his own hands. The same day the entrance to the palace used by the Taewongun was bricked over. Who actually gave this order is not recorded, but could it not have been done through the influence of the Queen?

The Taewongun had underestimated his daughter-in-law's cunning, as she had seemed to him primitive and incapable of master minding intrigues. In the end, there was nothing for him to do but retire to his house in Anguk-dong in Seoul. Only his son from a secondary wife, Lee Jae Son (李載先), remained near him. Several days after his fall there was a big fire in Kyongbok Palace as a result of an explosion in the sleeping palace of the Queen. One of the servants of the Taewongun was arrested, but as concrete evidence was lacking the matter was dropped. Queen Min was sure that her father-in-law was at the bottom of the incident, but she could not pursue the matter, as in Confucian society the father of one's husband is not subject to any form of judgement. Some days later a beautiful box was brought to the house of Min, Sung Ho (민승호), the closest confidante and relative of the Queen. When the box was opened, an explosion occurred and Min, his mother and a child were killed on the spot. Then there was a big fire in the house of Lee Ch'oe Ung, elder brother of the Taewongun and a devoted servant of the Queen. Again a servant of the former regent was arrested, and again the Taewongun himself remained safe. These attempts on the lives of the Queen, her family members, and closest aids were the first in numerous plots which threatened her during all her life in power. Following the traditional policy of Eastern cunning, the queen always managed to escape. There were ups and downs in her life, but she invariably succeeded in restoring her influence. On the 8th of February, 1874, she bore a son, Prince Chok, who eventually became the last king of the Yi

Dynasty, Sunjong (純宗 1907-1910). This event secured her position. As the mother of the heir and the head of the conservative party she began to enjoy the utmost power. She reigned from behind the curtain, and everybody knew that although orders were pronounced by the King, they were formulated by the Queen, but Kojong was not a mere puppet in her hands.

Historians suppose that relations between the king and his wife were not always ideal. For example, he supported the so-called 'party for reforms (개화파)' led by Kim, Ok Kyun (김옥균), and the conservatives led by the Queen (수구파), were against them. It was surely with the support of Kojong, who was said to be deeply interested in new and unknown things, that the reformists were promoted to high positions, but their plot turned out to be not only unsuccessful, it also threatened the throne and increased the foreign presence, so the position of the Queen and her party proved to be right. Her consistency was a counterbalance to Kojong's political experiments. Their differences in opinions could not greatly undermine the close relations of the royal couple.

Some modern authors speculate on whether the Queen loved her husband. Sunoda supposes that she really loved him with a kind of motherly love and found new strength for political intrigues in his weakness. Maybe it was so, but we should not forget that Queen Min lived in another world and belonged to a civilization where the concept of love in its modern understanding did not exist. Love, as we understand it now, appears only when people acquire freedom of choice. Confucianism never gave this freedom to women. Love was not included in the codex of behaviour for virtuous wives and queens, and the mentality of that time never exceeded that frame. The Queen was not an exception; the idea of love never occupied her mind. She shared with her husband all the difficulties and often took the responsibility for decisions concerning state matters. She fiercely and bravely struggled for preserving his absolute power and securing the same power for her son. Kojong undoubtedly was deeply attached to his energetic wife. It was clearly proved when three days after the assassination of the Queen, the Taewongun and his supporters, still cherishing hatred and revenge in their hearts, made a draft of a royal edict which deposed her from the rank of Queen and reduced her to the level of the lowest class, and asked the king to sign it. Being very much afraid for his own life, Kojong had already signed many edicts by then, but here he decisively refused and said that he would rather have his hands cut off.¹⁹ This was the most romantic expression of his devotion to his wife which can be found in historical documents.

NOTES

* Text of speech given at the R.A.S. meeting on May 8, 1996

1. Sunoda Fusako, *Assassination of Queen Min*, 1988, Chosŏn Ilbo Ch'ulp'ansa [쓰노다 후사코 1988(민비암살), 조선일보 출산사], p. 32
2. *The Women of Korea, A History from Ancient Times to 1945*, Ewha Womans University Press, Seoul, Korea, 1976, p. 116
3. Bishop, Isabella Bird, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, p. 274
4. This statement is based on the author's personal experience.
5. *Assassination of Queen Min* is a book by a Japanese writer Sunoda Fusako was published at the end of 80s and quickly became a best-seller in Japan
6. Na, Hong Ju, *Critics of Assassination of Queen Min* p. 16
7. Deuchler, Martina, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys: The Opening of Korea. 1875-1885*, University of Washington Press, 1977, p. 73
8. Queen Min barely escaped death during the Imo revolt and fled from the palace in a servant's dress.
9. (민비암살), p. 300
10. The author is grateful to Dr. Underwood who kindly presented her an English translation of the Seredin-Sabatin evidence, written several days after the assassination of the Queen.
11. Underwood, Lilius Horton, *Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots*, p. 89-90
12. Bishop, Isabella Bird, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, p. 47
13. Underwood L.H., *Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots*, p. 25
14. For detailed information see Choe Ching Young, *The Rule of Taewon'gun, 1864-1873. Restoration in Yi Korea*, Harvard East Asian Monographs 45, Cambridge, Mass.
15. *Minbi Amsal* (The Assassination of Queen Min), p. 59
16. *The Woman of Korea*, pp. 52-53
17. *Minbi Amsal* p. 71
18. *Minbi Amsal* p. 71
19. Bishop, I. *Korea and Her Neighbours*, P. 259.

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4. Underwood, Liliias Horton, *Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots*, Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 1977
 5. *The Women of Korea*, A History from Ancient Times to 1945, Ewha Womans University Press, Seoul, Korea, 1976.
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Form and Philosophy in Korean Buddhist Temple, Landscape and Architecture

by Valeri Tian

INTRODUCTION

The Buddhist architecture of Korea is an integral and essential part of Korean culture. In the course of its development, Buddhist architecture incorporated several philosophical concepts. These concepts existed within the context of the traditional culture and constitute an ephemeral and, at the same time, integral part of an architectural image of each temple. Unlike the visual characteristics of the preserved structures, the metaphysical components of the Buddhist temple are not easily perceived and need to be commented on.

The first part of this paper presents a historical overview of Korean Buddhist architecture. It discusses major trends from the Three Kingdoms period to the late Chosŏn and provides a description of the most famous temples.

The second part analyzes several principles in the spatial arrangement of the Buddhist temple based on various concepts such as the Buddhist scheme of the universe (*mandala*), the symbolic interpretation of the road to enlightenment and *p'ungsu* theory.

The third part discusses the philosophy of the traditional wooden structure system called *kongp'o* which was used for construction of Buddhist temples. This part explores the correspondence between the dominating perception of time and the continuity of architectural tradition. The discussion of *kongp'o* includes a hypothesis regarding its anthropomorphological roots of origin. A genesis of *kongp'o* as an architectural image of social harmony will also be discussed.

I. A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The history of Korean Buddhist architecture begins in 375 when the first Buddhist temple was built in Koguryŏ. According to the *Samguk Sagi* and the *Samguk Yusa*,¹ in 372 monk Sundo arrived in Koguryŏ from Former Ch'in. Twelve years later another monk called Ado arrived in Koguryŏ from the Chinese state of Later Wei. "In February the following year (385) the King had Ch'omunsa Temple (otherwise called Sŏngmunsa Temple) built for Sundo and Ibullansa Temple built for Ado."²

The introduction of Buddhism to Paekche occurred twelve years later than Koguryŏ. According historical records Buddhist priest Malananda arrived in Paekche from the Chinese state of Eastern Chin in September of 384³. The next year King Ch'imnyu ordered ten Buddhist temples to be built in Hansan (now Seoul), capital of Paekche.

Shilla was the latest state out of the Three Kingdoms to adopt Buddhism as a state religion. Unlike the other Korean states, Buddhism was not easily introduced to Shilla.

The first pioneer of the Buddhist mission in this last of the Three Kingdoms was believed to have been a man called Jungbang from Koguryŏ, who was seized and put to death by the Shilla authorities. The next missionary, Myulhubi, also from Koguryŏ, with his strange appearance of cropped head and clothes, was again taken by the Shilla people as a sign of a bad omen, and was, therefore, executed.⁴

Finally, Buddhism was adopted by Shilla in 535, about 150 years later than Koguryŏ. King Pophŭng established the first Buddhist temple of Hŭngnyunsa, which was the start of wide scale construction of Buddhist temples throughout the Shilla Kingdom.

A. Three Kingdoms Period

Period of Magic

Initially, Buddhism was perceived primarily as a magic art. The major function of Buddhist rituals and construction of the temples was to defend the state, and to defeat the enemies by magic means. The foundation of the temples also was always linked with a magic event. Therefore, I would label this period as a **Period of Magic**.

The construction was started with gigantic temples in the capitals, which

were placed next to palaces and played an important role in forming the city image. Major national temples of all three states (Koguryŏ, Paekche and Shilla) were built with huge yards, surrounded with galleries. From the very beginning the Buddhist temples had a comprehensive list of structures, which included pagodas, main halls, lecture halls, bell pavilion, sutra depository, residence of the priest, monk dormitory, gates, galleries, etc. The scale of temples was tremendous and competed with the king's palaces. Moreover, records report that the temples had five, seven, and nine-story pagodas, which were focal points of the architectural composition of the temples. Thus, temples even exceeded the palaces in height.

The remains of the first Buddhist temples of Koguryŏ, Sŏngmunsa and Ibullansa, built in Kungnae-sŏng have not been identified. One of the most well-known sites of Koguryŏ temples is the site near Ch'ŏngnamni village at the northern bank of Taedong River, about three km northeast P'yŏngyang.

Kŭmgangsa Temple site near Ch'ŏngnamni

The site faces the south. The southern gate leads to the huge octagonal pagoda (about 30.3 m wide) surrounded by three pavilions on the east, west and north. The northern pavilion was larger than the eastern and western ones. No traces of galleries were found at the site. The site shows two specific features of Koguryŏ temples. Its layout follows the so-called "one pagoda-three image hall" pattern, which is recognized as a specific feature of Koguryŏ temples. Another specific feature was that, unlike square pagodas built in other Korean kingdoms (Paekche and Shilla), Koguryŏ pagodas were octagonal.

Paekche changed its capital thrice. There are no remains of the first temple built in Hansŏng (around modern Seoul), first capital of Paekche, in 385. In 475 when the capital was transferred to Ungjin (modern Kŏngju), Taet'ongsa temple built in Kŏngju became the main national temple of Paekche. However, in 538 the capital again was moved to Sabi (modern Puyŏ). Mirŭksa Temple built by King Mu (reigned 600-641) in nearby Iksan city became the last major temple of Paekche Kingdom.

Mirŭksa

The temple had three main yards, each with its own pagoda and image hall. The yards were placed on one line from east to west. The middle one was the widest and had a wooden pagoda. The western and eastern yards enclosed seven storied stone pagodas. All pagodas were arranged along east-west axis. Only ruins of the western pagoda are preserved now. It is the biggest stone

pagoda in Korea. Stone work imitates a wooden structure and stone cantilevers of the pagoda are slightly curved upwards. Behind the main area there was another huge yard shaped by a lecture hall and two symmetrically arranged monk dormitories. The remains of another dormitory situated beyond the enclosure were also found right behind the lecture hall.

Paekche temples were usually built according to the so-called "one pagoda-one image hall" scheme, when only one image hall was placed in the main precinct of the temple behind the square shape pagoda. The layout of Mirŭksa temple represents a combination of three sections, each following the same original scheme. The unusual arrangement of Mirŭksa corresponds with a legend of the foundation of the temple recorded in the *Samguk Yusa*:

One day as the new King (King Mu) and Queen were returning from a visit to Saja temple, followed by a long train of servants, three images of Maitreya Buddha rose above the surface of a pond. They immediately halted their procession and worshipped the mysterious images, and the Queen said, "My husband, I wish to have a beautiful temple built on this pond where these three Maitreyas arose to meet us."

"Very well, it shall be done," the King replied. He again sought the help of the monk Chimyŏng, asking him to fill in the pond and prepare it for a building.

Obedient to the royal command, the old monk performed the task in one night by moving a distant mountain and dropping it upside down into the pond. Soon a magnificent temple called Mirŭksa had been erected. ("Mirŭk" is the Korean pronunciation of "Maitreya.") In the main hall stood the three Maitreya images and in the courtyard was a pagoda built with assistance of hundreds of architects and sculptors sent by King Chinp'ŏng.⁵

The main temple of the Shilla kingdom was Hwangnyongsa Temple. The name of the temple originates from a miracle, which was recorded in the *Samguk Yusa*:

In the second month of the fourteenth year of King Chinhŭng's reign (553) a yellow dragon appeared near the site of the detached Purple Palace, which was then under construction to the south of the royal residence. The King therefore changed the intended palace into a temple, naming it Hwangnyongsa—Yellow Dragon Temple. The pagoda was built in the thirtieth year of the King's reign (569) and so the whole construction was completed in seventeen years.⁶

Hwangnyongsa temple

The yard of the temple was enclosed by galleries. It is almost square in shape. The main axis goes from south to north through the main gates, a square wooden pagoda and the main image hall. The main image hall has two smaller image halls on both sides of it. All halls face the south. The bell pavilion and a sutra depository are placed in the southern part of the yard symmetrically towards the main axis. While all structures were destroyed, the records mention that "according the old book of Ch'aliju-gi, the pagoda measured 42 feet above and 183 feet below the iron base of the tower."⁷ The huge size of the buildings and pagoda indicate the tremendous scale of the main national temple of Shilla.

The temple went through several reconstructions. In 584 King Chinp'yŏng erected a new image hall. In 636 on the advice Chajang who returned from China, Queen Sŏndŏk built a new nine story wooden pagoda. It was completed according the design of Abiji, a famous architect invited to Kyongju from Paekche. Two hundred Paekche craftsmen went with him to Shilla to build the pagoda. The Samguk Yusa also mentioned that "the Records of Hwangnyongsa state that Chajang Pŏpsa received the construction plans for the pagoda from Wonhyang Sŏnsa on the South Mountain of Changan, the T'ang capital."⁸ The Tongdo Sŏngnip-ki (History of the Eastern Capital) compiled by An Hong, a renowned scholar of Haedong (Korea) says that each of the nine stories represent a people who had attacked Shilla, namely, from bottom to top, Japan, Chunghwa, Wu and Yueh, Takna, Ūngyu, Malgal, Tanguk, Yŏjŏk and Yemaek. The temple structures were destroyed by fire and rebuilt several times. Finally, it was burnt to ashes by Mongol invaders in 1239 and only ruins can be seen now.

Being the main national temple Hwangnyongsa Temple represents a special case in terms of spatial arrangement of Buddhist temples in Shilla. Usually they were built according to the so-called "two pagodas-one image hall" scheme, when the two symmetrically placed stone pagodas fix the main axis leading to the image hall. This scheme was widely used for temple construction during the following Unified Shilla period.

The construction of the Buddhist temples in the capital cities that started during the Three Kingdoms period dramatically changed the city landscape. One of the most significant innovations delivered by Buddhist architecture to Korea was the emerging of a vertical axis in cities, formed by a pagoda. Located within the central area of the city, it became the dominating vertical element of the city. The comparatively small size of Korean capital cities

allowed the populace to perceive the pagoda simultaneously with city gates or roofs of the palace, rising above the ordinary buildings. Most of the city was single story buildings covered with tiled roofs. The pagoda decorated with gold and silver and headed with a spire, appeared to be rising to the heavens. The organized internal space of the temple presented a sharp contradiction to the semi-chaotic crowded regular residential structures. Unfortunately none of the existing Korean cities now preserve those temples, which were destroyed during the multiple invasions and never were rebuilt again.

All original structures of the Three Kingdoms period have disappeared. Existing temples mainly consist of single story buildings and stone pagodas. However, several existing multi-storied Buddhist structures of the Chosŏn period (1392–1910) allow us to imagine the tremendous scale of the ancient temples. One of them is P'alsangjŏn Pagoda of Pŏpchusa temple built in 1626. It is the only five-story wooden pagoda to survive in Korea. At the same time the size of this pagoda is quite modest compared to those of Mirŭksa and Hwangnyongsa temples. The two story Kakhwajŏn Hall (1702) of Hwaŏmsa and three story Mirŭkjon of Kŭmsansa (XVII century) help us to imagine the scale and majesty of the main image halls of ancient temples.

After construction of the main national temples, other Buddhist temples were built throughout the country.

B. Unified Shilla (668-935)

The Golden age

In 669 the Shilla Kingdom defeated Paekche and Koguryŏ and unified the entire peninsula. The flourishing of Buddhism in Unified Shilla was accompanied with extensive temple construction. Buddhism had reached its *Golden Age*.

In the capital of Shilla, 808 Buddhist temples were erected; other works such as stone statues of Buddha, and towers mushroomed everywhere. From almost every house in the village the sound of the recitation of the sutras reverberated.⁹

During the said period there were 178, 936 houses in Kyŏngju.

During the Unified Shilla period, Buddhism started to spread among commoners and the architecture of the temple started to incorporate this change. The secularization of the main precinct of the temple began at the end

of the Three Kingdoms period. Except for the main national temple Hwangnyongsa, the compositional focus shifted from the pagoda to the image halls. This indicated that the accent also shifted from magic rituals to regular practices. The pagoda became much smaller in size, being just a symbolic monument rather than a magic structure. However, the perception of Buddhism as a magic art was still sustained. The magic power of Buddhism was proved again in the beginning of Unified Shilla period with the construction of *Sach'ŏnwangsa Temple*.

Sach'ŏnwangsa Temple site

The temple site is situated south-east Kyŏngju. The temple faced the south and was enclosed with a gallery. The main image hall was slightly moved north from the center of the rectangular yard. Two stone pagodas stayed in the southern part of the yard in front of the image hall, while the belfry and sutra depository stood behind it. The pagodas, belfry and sutra depository resemble the Four Heavenly Guards surrounding the main image hall. The size of the pagoda is very small and the sutra depository and belfry were even smaller than the pagodas. The northern part of the yard was enclosed by the lecture hall.

The temple was erected by King Munmu (reigned 661–681) in 679 to protect the country from an expected invasion of the Tang army. The name of the temple itself has a protective meaning. “Sach'ŏnwang” means Four Heavenly Kings, the Four Celestial Guardians of Buddhism. The legend recorded in the *Samguk Yusa* says that after construction of the temple, magic rituals were held in it. The fleet of the Tang Empire twice tried to attack the Korea and twice Chinese vessels went to the sea bottom.

The story of the construction of the magical Sach'ŏnwangsa Temple has become part of history which was continued with the construction of *Mandŏksa Temple*.

Mandŏksa Temple

The *Samguk Yusa* indicates that when the Chinese emperor knew about the magical Sach'ŏnwangsa Temple he “sent Lo P'eng-kuei, a high official in the Ministry of Education and External Affairs, to Shilla to inspect this mysterious temple. Hearing of his approach, the King of Shilla thought it not prudent to reveal the actual temple and so had another constructed to the south of it and waited.”¹⁰ When the Tang's envoy arrived he was shown the decoy temple which was Mandŏksa.

Mandōksa was erected in 685¹¹, or six years later than Sach'ōnwangsa, and is situated just 200m south of it. The layout of Mandōksa temple is similar to that of Sach'ōnwangsa. The galleries form a yard with an image hall in the center and two stone pagodas in front of it. However, no remains of the bell pavilion and sutra depository have been found.

Kamūnsa Temple

The main purpose of the *Kamūnsa Temple* construction was to protect the state. According to the *Samguk Sagi*, the construction was started by King Munmu, who unified Korea. During that time Japanese pirates frequently attacked the eastern coast. Therefore, King Munmu wished to become a dragon upon his death in order to protect the east of the country. The construction of the temple was completed by King Shinmun. The body of King Munmu was cremated and buried in a sea tomb near the temple.

The temple was erected in 682 in 34 km east of Kyōngju, near the East Sea. The main hall was built with a unique technique which seems to refer to the legend about the foundation of the temple. A stone floor was built above the ground. The rest of the structure was erected on this foundation. A short tunnel leading to the east was found under the stone slabs. This tunnel is considered to be an entrance for the Dragon, who enters from the East Sea to rest. The rest of the composition of the temple is typical for Shilla temples. Southern gates are placed on the main axis and open an access to the yard enclosed with galleries. The image hall was built in the center of the yard and two stone three-storied pagodas were erected in the southern part of the temple. Kamūnsa Temple represents the classical "two pagoda-one image hall" scheme used to layout Shilla Buddhist temples.

Pulguksa Temple

The most famous temple of the Unified Shilla period is Pulguksa temple built by Kim Taesōng, prime minister of the kingdom. The temple is situated at the foot of T'ohamsan mountain. The legends on the foundation of the temple say that:

Taesōng was an odd-looking son of a poor woman named Kyōngcho. They lived in a small village of Moryang-ni on the western outskirts of Kyōngju, the capital of Shilla. Together with his mother he donated their small rice field to Hūngnyunsa temple.

"A few months later Taesōng died. On night of his death, a voice

from heaven was heard above the house of Kim Munyang, the prime minister, saying "Taesǒng, the good boy of Moryang-ni, will be reborn in your family."

...Wonderful to relate, in the same hour as the heavenly announcement, the prime minister's wife conceived, and in due course gave birth to a boy. The child kept the fingers of his left hand tightly clenched until seven days after his birth, and when at last he opened them the characters for Taesǒng were seen written in gold on his palm. They gave him his old name again and invited his previous mother to care for him.

...Kim Taesǒng built the beautiful Pulguksa Temple in memory of his two sets of parents and also founded the wonderful grotto of Sǒkkuram. He invited two distinguished monks Shillim and P'yohun to supervise these temples. He had his fathers and mothers represented among the images in these temples in gratitude for bringing him up as a useful man."¹²

The construction of Pulguksa temple was begun in 751 and finished in 775. The stone terraces, staircases and pagodas are considered to be a part of original construction of the mid 8th century. The temple was rebuilt and reconstructed several times. The last reconstruction took place in 1973 and all wooden structures were rebuilt imitating the architectural style of the late Chosǒn period.

The layout of the temple represents a complex of several yards correlated in scale and placement. The main area is formed by two connected yards enclosed with galleries. The southern galleries are placed on one line. However, the eastern yard is deeper than western one, and therefore the northern galleries have a shift. One can enter the eastern yard by staircases called Yǒnhwa Ch'ilbogyo—Bridge of Lotus and Seven Treasures, and the western yard by staircases called Ch'ǒngun Paegungyo—Bridge of Blue and White Clouds. Originally a small water stream ran under the stairs, separating the sacred area of the temple from the profane world.

The eastern yard encloses an image hall dedicated to Buddha Shakyamuni. Two famous stone pagodas are placed in the southern part of this yard—Sǒkkat'ap (Pagoda of Buddha Shakyamuni) and Tabot'ap (Pagoda of Many Treasures). The Sǒkkat'ap pagoda is a three-storied pagoda of monumental simplicity and harmonic proportions. Sometimes it was called the Pagoda Without Shadows. It is also identified as the male element in the architectural composition of these two pagodas. The design of Tabot'ap pagoda is unique. It represents a sophisticated interpretation of a wooden structure built on a

high foundation with four staircases in four directions. The pagoda is identified as the female part in the architectural dialogue of the two pagodas. The eastern yard is divided by short galleries linking the image hall with enclosing galleries. The southern part of the eastern and western galleries extended outside of the yard. These extensions were used to place the bell and drum.

The western yard level is lower than the eastern one. The galleries enclose an image hall dedicated to Buddha Amida. A stone lantern is placed in front of the image hall. Image halls dedicated to Vairochana Buddha and Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara are located in the northern part of the temple. They are also enclosed with stone walls. Behind the western yard of Buddha Amida the vestiges of an image hall dedicated to Buddha Maitreya were found. However, the image hall was not rebuilt.

The terraces of the temple themselves are of special interest because of their structure. They were built with a frame of curved stones, which was filled by stones of natural shape. This structure also imitates wooden form. The size of stones filling the frame decreases from bottom to the top, creating an impression of lightness and rationality.

Sökkuram Temple

The Buddhist sculpture and unique architecture of Sökkuram temple are referred as the highest achievements of Shilla culture. UNESCO placed the Sökkuram Temple along with Pulguksa temple on the World List of Cultural Treasures. Sökkuram does not fit the main stream of the development of Korean Buddhist architecture which was built mainly in wood and above the earth's surface however.

The temple was built in 751 by Kim Taesöng. It is situated on the eastern slope of T'ohamsan mountain a few hundred meters away from Pulguksa. Originally it was called Sökpulsa (Temple of Stone Buddha). The circular hall was built in stone blocks and then mounted with earth like ancient tombs. The entrance faces the east. A rectangular entrance hall was partly built in wood. During the reconstruction of the entrance hall undertaken by the Japanese colonial administration in 1913, the shape of the entrance hall was slightly changed. The original square shape was restored during the reconstruction in 1963. The layout of the temple represents a combination of two principal geometric forms: a circle (main hall) and a square (entrance hall).

The form of the main hall symbolically associates the harmonious circle with the heavenly world of Buddha, which is opposed to the profane world interpreted as a square entrance hall. Images of Celestial Guardians, engraved

on both sides of the short passage leading from the entrance hall to the main one, indicate the gates to Buddha's world. The stone image of Buddha is slightly moved to the rear of the geometrical center of the circular hall. The orientation of the temple and the gestures (mudra) of the statue indicate that it represents Buddha Amida—Buddha of the Western Paradise. The engraved images of Buddhist gods and bodhisattvas are arranged on the walls of the circular hall in accordance with the Buddhist concept of the universe.

C. Koryŏ Dynasty (935-1392)

Before the Sunset

During the Koryŏ Dynasty Buddhist architecture continued to flourish. Buddhism reached its peak of political power. The temples competed in wealth and luxurious decoration. However, in 993, 1011 and 1019 Khitan Mongol tribes invaded Korea and destroyed many cities. Many architectural masterpieces were burnt down. Following each invasion an active reconstruction of the ruined temples was undertaken. The oldest wooden structures in Korea survive from that period.

During the Koryŏ Dynasty along with diversification of the Buddhist schools, Buddhism began to assimilate local beliefs. Therefore, the temples began to include shrines dedicated to Mountain Spirits and the Seven Stars of Taoism. These shrines were built of modest size and placed behind the main halls.

The other specific feature of Buddhist temples architecture of the Koryŏ Dynasty is that the bell pavilion was often placed on the main axis of the temple. Built of two stories, it became an intermediate gate. A set of musical instruments (bell, drum, wooden fish, and gong) were hung on the second floor.

Hŭngwangsa Temple

Hŭngwangsa Temple was the main temple of Koryŏ Kingdom. It was as magnificent as the main temple of Shilla.

Its structures measured 2.800 k'ans¹³ in total and were built during twelve years from 1056 to 1068. The description of the temple mention that a 13-storied pagoda (pagodas—V.D. Tian) was built in 1079, decorated with gold outside and with silver inside. 114 kŭn (68kg) of gold and 427 kŭn (250kg) of silver were spent for the decoration.¹⁴

The site faces south. The temple had three yards. The southern gallery of the main one was placed slightly forward. Two wooden octagonal pagodas were erected in the main yard, fixing a central pass to the main image hall. The lecture hall enclosed the yard from the north. The function of the small structures found behind the lecture hall are not identified. The western yard was slightly wider than the eastern one. On one hand, the central part of the temple was arranged according the Shilla scheme of temple layout—one image hall with two pagodas. On the other hand, the octagonal shape of wooden pagodas originates from Koguryŏ architectural tradition. The three yards composition recalls similar schemes of Mirŭksa Temple of Paekche and Hwangnyongsa temple of Shilla. Therefore, composition of Hŭngwangsa Temple incorporated various architectural traditions formed in previous periods in southern and northern parts of the Korean peninsula.

Pusŏksa Temple

Pusŏksa temple is situated 25 km from Yŏngju city and four km from Pusŏk village, in a small valley on the southern slope of Ponhwasan mountain—one of the famous mountains in Northern Kyŏngsangdo province. The mountain embraces the site from three sides, leaving open a picturesque view to the south. According to the historical records, the temple was founded in 676 by monk Ŭisang, the founder of Hwaŏm school of Korean Buddhism. While founded in the Unified Shilla period, the temple has only two stone pagodas of that period. The two oldest wooden structures date from the Koryŏ period.

The central part is divided into three major levels, each of which are subdivided into three smaller levels. The massive stonework is made of huge stones. Their diameter sometimes approaches one m. Stone stairs and pagodas are dated from the Unified Shilla period. On the first level one can see the Chŏnwangmun gates, reconstructed in 1980. On the third level a monk's dormitory and toilet and two stone pagodas of Unified Shilla period were recently built. On the fourth level, a storage pavilion for ancient paintings and other relics were also recently constructed. The entrance from the fifth to sixth level is arranged through a two story bell pavilion, which is also an intermediate gate of the temple. The bell pavilion was constructed by the second half of the Chosŏn period (16th-20th centuries). Ŭnhyanggak pavilion and Chwihyŏnnam pavilion were also constructed recently. Here the main axis of the temple makes a turn of ~20°. The Anyangmun pavilion is a last gate of the temple leading to the last terrace of the temple. Here one can see the main hall of the temple—Muryangsujŏn (13th century), one of several structures that survived

from Koryŏ period. The Chosadang (Hall of the Founder) built in 1373 is located in the mountains behind the Muryangsujŏn.

Muryangsujŏn is built with a roof of *p'alchak* type (hipped and gabled roof). The wooden parts are not painted and preserve the natural wood color, while the wall surfaces are covered with yellow paint. The specific feature of the structure is that, unlike the other image halls, it has a floor covered with stone slabs. The other interesting feature is that the Buddha image is located not in the center of the building in front of the entrance but placed by the western wall to the left of the entrance. The simple and elegant Muryangsujŏn is considered one of the most beautiful structures in Korea.

Two other architectural masterpieces from the Koryŏ dynasty are the Taeunjŏn Pavilion (1308) of Sudŏksa Temple and Kŏnnakchŏn Pavilion of Bongjŏngsa Temple (Phoenix Bower Temple) which was founded by the famous monk Ŭisang in 672 in Andong county.

All existing structures of the Koryŏ period were built in remote mountainous areas, which was a reason for their survival during the invasions and oppression of Buddhism during the Chosŏn. On the other hand, all these structures are very modest in size.

D. Chosŏn Dynasty Period (1392–1910)

Period of Decline

During the Chosŏn Dynasty, Buddhism was heavily oppressed. Many temples were destroyed, or occupied by government offices or even by pleasure houses. Buddhism was pushed out of the official culture. At the same time, it became even closer to the peasants and commoners, actively incorporating the local beliefs. The major function of the temple shifted from providing official ceremonies to addressing the needs of ordinary people.

In 1592 the Japanese army invaded Korea. A specific type of Buddhist temple, representing a combination of a temple and military camp composed of Buddhist monks appeared during the military campaigns. The composition of these sites indicated the final stage of secularization of the main precinct of the Buddhist temple, where the image hall preserves its central position, but monk dormitories became the dominating structures of the temple composition and were placed just in front of the image hall. Pagodas finally became supplemental structures.

The active reconstruction of temples was undertaken after the Japanese invasion in 1592. These activities were a spontaneous process, and the initial

layout of the ancient temples was often transformed. Therefore it is difficult to determine the original composition of such old temples like, say, Pŏmŏsa. At the same time, during this period the architectural composition of many famous Korean temples was finalized including those of T'ongdosa, Songgwangsa and Haeinsa, which are called the *Three Treasures of Korean Buddhism*.

T'ongdosa—The Treasure of the Buddha

T'ongdosa is one of the biggest surviving temples. Founded during the Three Kingdoms period by the monk Chajang, it houses the most sacred treasure of Korean Buddhism—actual remains of Buddha Shakyamuni, enclosed in a stone pagoda called Sarit'ap. The Iljumun gate marks the entrance to the temple from the east. Ch'ŏnwangmun gate is the second gate of the temple and Purimun gate is the third gate. The consequent yards are arranged along the main axis of the temple leading to the Taeunjŏn, the main building of the temple. The architecture of this structure is unusual. It has three pediments on the roof from the east, south and west, while there is no pediment from the north side, which faces the Sarit'ap. Moreover the structure has no Buddha statues. Instead the rear northern wall has a window so the followers can see the top of the Sarit'ap from the building. This view substitutes the image of Buddha.

Haeinsa—The Treasure of the Teachings

This temple is in a narrow valley located deep in the mountains and stretches from south-west to north-east. Unlike T'ongdosa, where all gates are arranged along a straight line, the main axis of Haeinsa has a small shift between the Ponghwamun gate and Haet'almun Gate. The road leading to the last Kuchwangnu Gate has also been shifted. All existing structures of the temple were reconstructed or rebuilt several times and therefore no original ancient structure can be found on its grounds. However the fame of Haeinsa derives from the fact that it houses the famous Buddhist sutras engraved in classical Chinese on over 80,000 woodblocks, which are preserved in a special depository.

Songgwangsa—The Treasure of the Sangha (Representing the monastic community)

Being the home temple for a number of outstanding monks in Korean history, this temple is often called the Treasure of the Sangha. In addition to that, the temple provides one of the best examples of landscaping. The entrance to the temple is arranged with a bridge over a small stream. The structures of the

temple, the stream and surrounding landscape form a magnificent harmonic picture, which allows us to recognize this temple as one of the masterpieces of Korean architecture. Of additional importance is that it preserves two ancient structures: Kuksajŏn, built in 1359, and Hasadang, built in 1450.

During the Chosŏn period all surviving temples across the country were continuously reconstructed and rebuilt. Unlike previous periods when Buddhism was a part of state ideology, it now became primarily a religion of the common folk. Buddhist architecture reflected this change incorporating many folk culture influences. The layout of the temple became less organized in terms of geometric order. Buddhist structures were colorfully decorated with paint as well.

The major trends in the development of Buddhist architecture can be summarized in following table

<p>Three Kingdoms Period: Koguryŏ (?BC 37–AD 668) Paekche (?BC 18–AD 660) Shilla (? BC 57–AD 668)</p>	<p>Large scale, city temple, galleries, multi-storied structures 3 image halls + 1 pagoda (octagonal) 1 image hall + 1 pagoda 1 image hall + 2 pagodas</p>
<p>Unified Shilla (668–918)</p>	<p>Temples with galleries + mountain temples Introduction of new spatial arrangements patterns (Sŏkkuram) <i>Chusimp'o</i> style of traditional wooden structure</p>
<p>Koryŏ (918–1392)</p>	<p>Active construction of temples without galleries in the mountains Active incorporation of <i>p'ungsu</i> theory, construction of shrines for local deities Introduction of <i>Tap'o</i> style of traditional wooden structure</p>
<p>Chosŏn (1392–1910)</p>	<p>Mountain temples Monk military camps Reconstruction and spontaneous development of existing temples + active construction of local folk shrines <i>Nugak</i> structures Introduction of <i>Ikkon</i> style of traditional wooden structure</p>

II. PRINCIPLES OF SPATIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The perception of Buddhist temples may not be adequate without clarification of the principles of its spatial arrangements. These principles incorporate several concepts. One is related to the so-called *mandala*—a Buddhist scheme of the universe. The other is linked to the interpretation of the temple composition as “a road to enlightenment” or road to *nirvana*. The third concept is based on the geomantic theory of *p’ungsu*.

A. Mandala

The Buddhist temple represents a sort of architectural interpretation of the *mandala*, a Buddhist pictorial scheme of the universe. This scheme shows the layout of the universe as an external circle with a square laying within its boundaries. In turn, the square contains several internal concentric circles. The external circle represents the entire universe, depicting its boundaries and symbolizes time. The square represents the spatial parameters of the universe and determines the cardinal directions. The entry points on each cardinal direction are marked with a T-shape gate. Each internal circle corresponds with a level of Buddhist hierarchy or, say, level of *enlightenment* as follows:

Center—	Buddha
2nd level—	Bodhisattvas
3rd—	Arhats (Buddha’s disciples)
4th—	Gods and creatures

Buddha occupies the central part of the mandala. Bodhisattvas surround him. Four Celestial Guardians defend the Buddha’s world in the four cardinal directions. In Korea these guardians were called the Four Heavenly Kings (*Sach’ŏn wang*):

North—	Vaishravana
East—	Dhiritarashtra
South—	Viruhaka
West—	Virupaksha

Correspondence between the layout of sacred structures and religious concepts of the universe is a common feature of world architecture. Buddhist architecture is not excluded. The Borobodur temple in Indonesia represents the most direct application of *mandala* as the foundation for architectural com-

position. This temple was erected in the form of a tetragonal pyramid. The pyramid has several terraces with carved statues of Buddhist gods and saints placed according their hierarchy from bottom to the top. The composition reproduces one of the most detailed and sophisticated images of *mandala*.

In Korea, the concept of *mandala* was also incorporated into the spatial arrangement of Buddhist temples. However Korean temples never reproduced the direct copy of *mandala*, equal to the composition of the Borobodur temple. Influence of the *mandala* concept can be traced in the composition of Sarit'ap pagoda of T'ongdosa Temple. The square basement is oriented towards the cardinal directions. The center is fixed with the small tower. Four gates indicate four entrances to the Buddha's world.

Similar principals of the composition affected the layout of ancient Sach'önwang Temple, where the image hall marks the center and four minor structures are arranged around it. The galleries shape a yard almost square in shape.

Most of the temples have an intermediate gate called *Sach'önwang* Gate, which also refers to this concept.

The placement of the image halls usually follows a specific hierarchical order, which, basically, corresponds with the hierarchical order of the *mandala*. The main image hall dedicated to Buddha is surrounded by image halls and shrines dedicated to the bodhisattvas, then to arhats and finally local deities.

B. The Road to Enlightenment

According to *Mahāyāna*¹⁵ Buddhism, every person can become a Buddha. This process has several stages of self-development called "ten stages of the bodhisattva". The central road of the temple may be considered as a symbolic expression of this concept. The Iljumun gate becomes the first step towards enlightenment and the other intermediate gates or terraces indicate the subsequent stages of this process. Therefore the perception of physical movement becomes an important and integral part of perception of the temple and its architectural composition. The culmination of the architectural composition occurs in the main yard.

The main road of Pömōsa Temple represents one of the best interpretations of this concept. The picturesque landscaping and the gates form a unique story of "entering nirvana". While moving through the gates one perceives the changing pictures where the gates become frames and the road and trees

become actors of an architectural performance.

Sometimes, due to shifts of axis or turns of the main road, the view of the main structure appears suddenly, just like the experience sudden enlightenment. In other cases, a beautiful view of the surrounding scenery becomes available from the upper terrace in front of the main structure. This is similar to the vision of Buddha, who perceives the world in a different way, compared to ordinary "blind" people.

The design of Pusōksa Temple is based on concepts derived from the Chōngt'o (Pure Land) school of Korean Buddhism. According to this teaching, the Paradise created by Buddha Amida is situated in the West. The way to the Pure Land is divided into three stages, each subdivided into three steps. Consequently nine rebirths compose the way to *Nirvana*. The temple site is divided into three terraces, each subdivided into three minor levels. The main image hall is named as *Nirvana Hall* (Muryangsujōn). The wide and boundless view is perceived from the last terrace of the temple from Muryangsujōn.

The concept of Paradise created by Buddha Amida in the West influenced the location of the structures and objects dedicated to Buddha Amida. In Pulguksa Temple the image hall of Buddha Amida was placed in a minor yard to the west of the main Hall of Buddha Shakyamuni. Similarly, the image hall of Buddha Amida is placed in the western part of the Pongjōngsa Temple. Moreover, usually, the statues of Buddha are placed in front of the main entrance door of the image hall. However, in Pusōksa Temple the statue of Buddha Amida was placed to the left from the main entrance door next to the western wall. This is not understandable from the viewpoint of formal composition. But it is logical from the viewpoint of symbolic connotation.

C. P'ungsu Theory

In addition to principles originating from purely Buddhist doctrines, the spatial arrangement of Korean Buddhist temples also corresponds with so-called *p'ungsu* theory. We need to recall several basic terms and principals of eastern philosophy.

Ūm and yang concepts

According the ancient Chinese philosophy *ŭm and yang* (yin and yang) represent a universal complementarity between the male and female, light and dark, odd and even, etc. The mutual interaction of *ŭm and yang* determines all

changes in the universe.

Five Elements

All phenomena of the universe were divided into five classes or five elements: *water, fire, wood, earth, metal*. Each has its own set of specific features. The cardinal directions are also associated with five Elements. North–*Water*, East–*Wood*, South–*Fire*, West–*Metal*, Center–*Earth*. Five elements have two types of mutual interaction: mutual reproduction or mutual destruction. Mutual reproduction was considered as positive, and mutual destruction was considered negative. Architectural objects supposed to be in a positive mode of interaction with the natural environment and other architectural forms.

Ki—as a substance of the universe

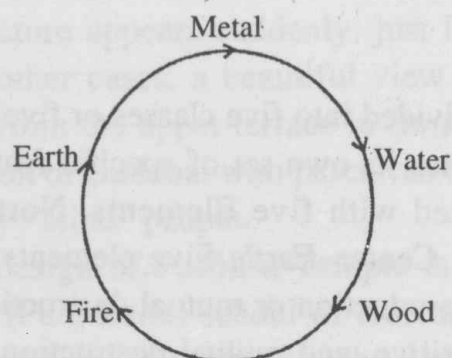
According to traditional thinking, the universe consists of *ki*. *Ki* exists in both types: *ŭm and yang*. To some extent, *ki* corresponds with “substance” in Western terminology. *Ki* spreads as wind, rises up to become clouds, falls down as rain and moves in the earth, becoming the life energy *saeng ki*. Moving in the earth *saeng ki* gives birth to everything. If *ki* is swept by the wind, it will be diffused. If it is surrounded by water, it will be stopped. Therefore, the topography of the site can be analyzed in terms of the *ki* movement.

Focal point Hyŏl

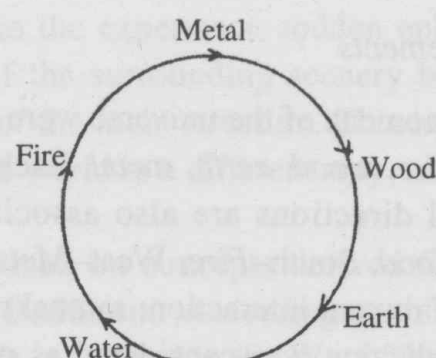
The place where heaven *ki* and earth *ki* accumulate and harmonically interact is called *hyŏl*. It is considered an extremely advantageous place. *Hyŏl* literally means a cave. In terms of *p’ungsu*, *hyŏl* indicates a special point where *ki* is concentrated and the interaction between the two types of *ki* is the most active. This is a meeting point of descending “*heaven ki*” and ascending “*earth ki*”. Such a site should be surrounded with mountains to prevent the diffusion of *ki*, and with a water stream to prevent the *ki* from leaking away.

Interestingly enough the same term *hyŏl* is used in traditional oriental medicine (acupuncture) for identification of similar points on the human body which were used in the course of medical treatment. The same points are used in oriental martial arts for the most effective kicks. The usage of this term in different contexts is based on the structural integrity of the universe as the fundamental principle of oriental philosophy. In this context, the structure of the human body is perceived the same as that of the universe.

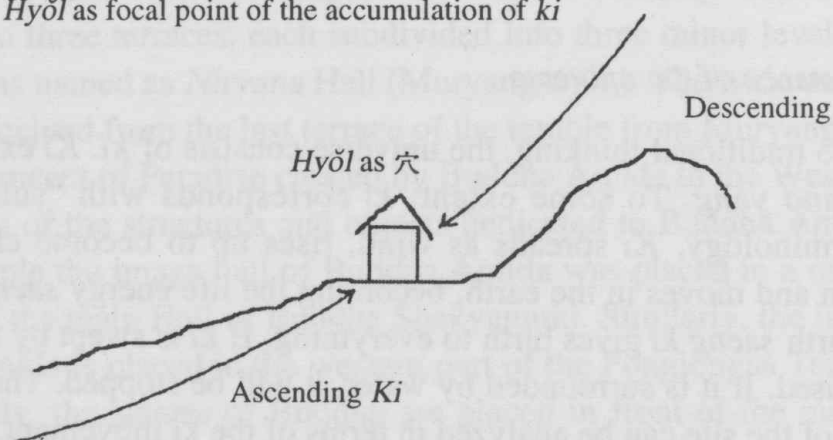
Mutual reproduction



Mutual destruction



Hyōl as focal point of the accumulation of ki



The p'ungsu theory determines a strict order of construction as following:

1. Site selection. The evaluation of the site is done in terms of *p'ungsu theory*: identification of elements of landscape (mainly mountains), evaluation of their interaction, orientation of the site, direction of the water stream and so on.
2. Identification of the *hyōl* spot.
3. Setting the structures on the site.
4. Identification of the proper time for each construction cycle.
 - a) beginning of the construction
 - b) setting the foundation
 - c) cutting the forest
 - d) placement of column bases
 - e) erecting of the columns
 - f) erecting the ridge beam
 - g) construction
 - h) finishing and decoration

These procedures do not seem to be especially unique at first sight. However the content of each stage should be explained.

1. Site selection and evaluation of the forms of landscape.

The site selection was considered extremely important. The proper location of a city, village, dwelling or a tomb is supposed to bring prosperity and wealth. The proper location of the temple enforces its magic power. Various methods were used to analyze the landscape.

The most widespread method was to analyze the shape of the mountains. Their shapes were divided into five major types associated with five Elements: *Water, Fire, Wood, Earth, Metal*.

A Earth Mountain has flat top and square foot.

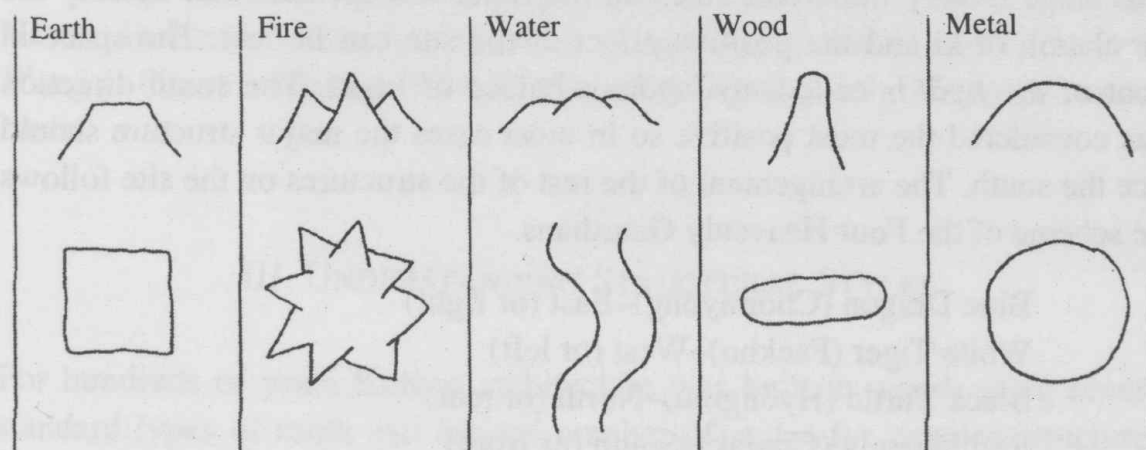
A Fire Mountain has sharp peaks like fire flames

A Water Mountain has a wave-like shape.

A Wood Mountain has sheer side like the tree.

A Metal Mountain has smooth slopes and spherical shape.

Mountain types



Such a classification links the shapes and location of the mountains with the concept of mutual interaction of the five Elements.

For example, the location of a *Wood* Mountain in the north is positive. The North is associated with *Water*, and *Water* produces *Wood*, therefore this relation represents a positive type of mutual interaction of the five Elements. At the same time, the location of a *Wood* Mountain in the west is considered negative. The West is associated with *Metal* that destroys *Wood*. Following the same logic, the location of a *Fire* Mountain in the south is considered positive, while its location in the north is considered negative.

None of the above mountain types is absolutely positive or negative. The positive evaluation of a site is based exclusively on the type of interaction between them.

2. Identification of the *hyŏl* spot.

After a proper site is identified, the next step is to identify the *hyŏl* spot. As mentioned above, the *active ki* moves under the earth's surface and is reflected on the topography of the site. Therefore, there is a possibility to identify the point of the accumulation of *ki* based on the formal characteristics of landscape. There are at least four standard types of *hyŏl* identified in accordance with the *p'ungsu* theory. The methods to pinpoint the *hyŏl* spot for dwellings and for tombs are slightly different. In case of a tomb, the body of the dead interacts with *ki* directly, while in case of a dwelling an interaction with "active *ki*" is indirect. In general the procedures are very much the same for different types of structures. Once the *hyŏl* is identified the main structure is located at this point.

3. Arrangement of the structures on the site.

This stage is very important since an improper arrangement can destroy the circulation of *ki* and the positive effect of the site can be lost. The space in front of the *hyŏl* is called *myŏngdang*—Palace of Light. The south direction was considered the most positive so in most cases the major structure should face the south. The arrangement of the rest of the structures on the site follows the scheme of the Four Heavenly Guardians

- Blue Dragon (Chŏnnyong)—East (or right)
- White Tiger (Paekho)—West (or left)
- Black Turtle (Hyŏngmu)—North (or rear)
- Red Phoenix (Chujak)—South (or front)

The locations of the gate, yard, main structure, kitchen, well and toilet are the most critical. The Importance of the gate is easily understood, based on the anthropomorphic model. The entire complex refers to the human body and therefore the gate is the "mouth of a house".

The circulation of positive (*yang*) *ki* and negative (*ŭm*) *ki* has some specifics. The *yang ki* is light. It can move straight and at the same time it is able to change the direction of movement. The *ŭm ki* is heavy and it can move only straight. Therefore the turns or shifts of the road leading from the gate to the main structure prevent the negative *ki* from penetration.

In many cases roads leading to the temple (Haeinsa, Hwaŏmsa, Songgwangsa) have a shift. In Pusŏksa and Pŏmŏsa temples the road slightly turns. In those temples where the gates are arranged along the main axis (Pŏpchusa, Magoksa) a water stream crosses the road and blocks the negative *ki*. In Ssanggyesa temple the water stream crosses the road twice.

3. Identification of the proper time for the construction stages.

The most simple requirement was the following: "Every year has twelve months and every month has a phase of *active ki* and a phase of *passive ki*. When the construction is undertaken in accordance with the phase of *active ki*, prosperity comes."¹⁶ In addition, all recommended dates for construction should not belong to the Earth Element. When the *ki* of the earth is in its extreme, the construction process can destroy the energy of the season.

P'ungsu theory has no relation to Buddhist doctrines. However, Buddhist architecture in Korea demonstrates close and intimate ties with *p'ungsu* theory. Such great temples as Haeinsa, Hwaŏmsa, etc., were built fully in accordance with the principles of *p'ungsu* theory. Pusŏksa temple serves as a perfect sample of implementation of *p'ungsu* principles.

Many scholars mention that the special interaction between Man and Nature in Korean culture resulted in a specific aesthetics and life style. *P'ungsu* theory demonstrates that this relation has a very strong conceptual basis.

III. UNDERSTANDING STRUCTURAL STYLES

For hundreds of years Korean architecture was built in wood, using several standard types of roofs and limited number of styles for wooden structures. This appears strange compared to the history of European architecture which displays a kaleidoscope of architectural styles. The history of oriental architecture demonstrates an absolutely different picture. The changes occurring over the centuries seem to be very few. Oriental architecture and particularly Korean traditional architecture is unique in terms of continuity of architectural language. This fact generates several questions. One, why was there a definite preference for wood? Second, what is the significance of the continuity of traditional structural styles? The third is, what is the symbolic meaning of traditional structures?

A. A traditional wooden structure

A traditional wooden structural system, called *kongp'o*, represents a system where the weight of the roof is transferred onto columns over the bracket units. The brackets consist of bracket arms *soro* and square details called *do*. In most cases the brackets have several layers forming a kind of pyramid turned upside down. This system provides an extension of the roof edge and the curved line of the roof edge. The roof extension protects the walls from rain. The curved line of the roof, on the one hand, corresponds with oriental aesthetics, and, on the other hand, prevents the roof edge from sagging. *Kongp'o* also provides excellent ventilation of the wooden details and prevents decay. Korean scholars distinguish three major structural styles of *kongp'o*: *chusimp'o*, *tap'o* and *ikkon*.

Chusimp'o style is the most ancient style with brackets placed only above the column. *Tap'o* style was introduced to Korea at the end of Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392) and represents a system where the brackets are placed not only above the columns but also on the beam between the columns. It is the most sophisticated and elaborate style. The utilitarian *ikkon* style was invented in the mid Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910) and represents a simplified modification of *chusimp'o* style. *Ikkon* is subdivided into two subtypes: one-wing style and two-wings style. This style was used primarily for construction of supplementary buildings.

B. Why wood?

Time perception and architectural traditions

When we look at the history of the European architecture we find that the foundation of the development of the European architectural tradition is the Greek order. In general, the major stages of development of European architecture can be discussed in terms of their correspondence with one or another interpretation of Greek order. However, the Greek order broke its genetic relation with wooden structures at very beginning of its development. Consequently, the mainstream of European architectural tradition is primarily associated with stone.

The Korean architectural order called *kongp'o* played a similar role as a basis for development of the architectural tradition, but it preserved its wooden origin. The main material of Korean architecture is wood.

The history of Korean architecture shows wonderful samples of stone

crafts of Shilla (Pulguksa Temple terraces, stonework of Sökkuram grotto). The 1000 li wall of Koguryŏ and Suwŏn fortress of late Chosŏn demonstrated the ability of Korean craftsmen to produce large scale stone structures. Nevertheless, Korean architecture did not consider stone or brick as major construction material. This fact always provokes the question: "Why such an absolute preference for wood as construction material?" To answer this question we should consider the perception of the universe in Korean traditional culture.

My understanding is that traditional Korean culture was based on symbolic and associative methods of thinking, rather than an exclusively rational one. Therefore, a purely structural or functional interpretation of the traditional structural system has very little to do with the specifics of a given cultural tradition.

Russian scholar Lev Gurevich wrote: "Human society is a process of continual movement, change and development. People of different cultures perceive and realize the world in a specific way, determined by their historic stage."¹⁷

An analysis of universal concepts identifies a few major patterns of time perception throughout history. One is *cyclic time* that is associated with archaic cultures. It is linked to natural temporal cycles (four seasons; day and night; birth, life, death; and etc.). Activities within archaic society are based on the perception of time as a sequence of cycles. The life rhythm of the people coincided with the time cycles of nature. Archaic cultures also produced myths about the creation of the world. This was the first indication of the perception of *linear time*. *Linear time* entails an eternal sequence of events which never repeat.¹⁸ The scientific concept of time, for example, is associated with a mathematical line, coming from nowhere and going nowhere.

The dominant perception of the universe in Korean traditional culture was based on *cyclic time*. This may be explained accordingly.

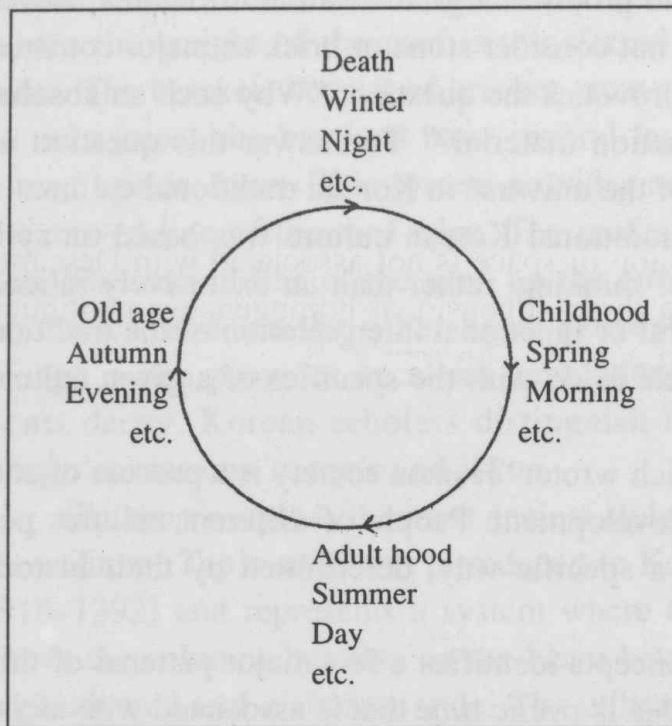
One reason is the relation between social activities and seasonal changes. Korean society was an agricultural society. The rhythm of this society was entirely affected by the *seasonal changes of nature and therefore resulted in the perception of time as a sequence of time cycles*. Social activities like trade are somewhat less sensitive to annual seasons.

Another reason is the traditional time calibration which is based on a 60 year cycle. The only available starting point for the *linear time concept* was the date of the foundation of Chosŏn by Tangun. Buddhism also brought a new time benchmark, which is Buddha's birthday. However, the official chronicles indicate the dates in accordance with the dynasty cycle (reign year) and with the 60 years cycle system. The enthroning of a new king was also

Time Concepts in Traditional Cultures

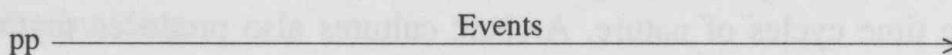
1. Cyclic Time

(Life cycle—Wood as major construction material)



2. Linear Time

(Eternity—Stone as major construction material)



associated with a new time cycle.

Korean traditional culture functioned in accordance with the global time rhythms of the universe. Its philosophy emphasized the correspondence of actions with the proper *time*. This is a key for understanding the traditional preference for wood. Wood is perceived as a temporal material in contrast to stone which is an eternal material. The life of a wooden structure is comparable to human life. Once the structure is erected (born), it exists (lives) and it is destroyed (dies). It exists within the frame of a life cycle.

Korean architecture does not challenge Time. Understanding that life comes to an end, the task of erecting "eternal buildings" was not considered an ultimate one. Buddhism has a significant impact on time perception, bringing the concept of the world as a temporal reality within the endless cycles of Buddha-worlds. Fragility and temporality of human existence determined the consciousness of ancient Koreans. This led to a specific perception of time and therefore to the preference for wood. Eternity as an aesthetic value was not

accepted by traditional Korean culture. *A cultural pattern prevails here: harmony with the universe in both its spatial and temporal aspects.*

C. Why kongp'o?

Heterogeneity of time and space = homogeneity of the architectural language

Cyclic time is not homogeneous. It has beneficial and negative phases. Similarly, Korean traditional perception of space is not associated with Descartes' theoretical model of space as a three-dimensional homogeneous continuum. Space is also perceived as heterogeneous. Ancient *p'ungsu* theory, which was discussed above, determines the rules correlating human existence within heterogeneous space. The specific features of oriental perception of space like the preference for horizontal direction, the special role of the center, etc. are often mentioned by other scholars.

The perception of time and space as heterogeneous inevitably challenges cultural integrity. *Cyclic time* divides the cultural continuum into separate pieces. In terms of architecture, it means that, as ancient structures disappear (die) there are no remains of those times. The time connection disappears. The creation of the *kongp'o* as a continuous architectural language became an ultimate solution to meet this challenge. The temporal and discrete character of traditional architecture dialectically resulted in the continuity of the *kongp'o* system. It became a linking chain connecting the past and future, the ideal and real space. *The discrete pieces of non-eternal architecture, which existed within a life cycle of a human generation, was an integral part of the continuous cultural tradition. They formed a sustainable architectural language.*

D. Column = Man?

Symbolic Interpretation of kongp'o

The role of *kongp'o* in Korean architectural tradition is fundamental. Yet its genesis as a symbolic system has not been explored. I propose that we consider *kongp'o* in connection with the anthropomorphology of architectural forms.

The history of world cultures teaches that an analogy between the human body and the universe is universal. The association of a column with the human body is the most common, archaic pattern of architectural thinking. Note the comparisons of the Greek order styles with the human body. The Ionic order, in this case, is compared to a young woman, the Doric order-to a

man. Greek culture also provided a direct interpretation of this association. The best sample is the Caryatids of the Erechteion Temple (BC 421–406) of the Greek Acropolis. The universal spread of this pattern is also proved by the Egypt Guzan Temple (Tel-Hlaf, X century BC). Moreover, archaic cultures of 20th century like the African *ishede* people also give us a sample of columns with a shape of a human body. *Therefore the anthropomorphological should be considered a possible (while not an exclusive) way to explore the authentic meaning of an ancient structure.*

Professor Pak Öngon of Hong Ik University in his *Hanguk Kõnch'uksa kangchwa*, has raised this issue already. However, this idea seems to be ignored by other scholars. The morphological concept may be considered extremely subjective, but it leads us to some interesting observations.

Once we accept the proposal of Professor Pak¹⁹ to associate the *kongp'o* structure with the human body (table 1), the next logical step is to compare the brackets with human hands, the so-called *soro* with a human hand. Multiplication of layers in *tap'o* style of *kongp'o* may bring confusion to the proposed association. The interpretation of multi-clustered *tap'o* style in this case will sound like: "Many men with many hands supporting a beam." Symbolically, this sounds much better than: "one man with many hands supports a beam" (first stage of *chusimp'o*). This corresponds with a more powerful structure. One may say that the multi-handed man is nonsense. However, for ancient people the gods and devils were as real as the sky and the earth. Their images and power were integral part of the human picture of the world. At the same time, the image of Indian gods and devils were familiar to Chinese and Koreans through Buddhism. They often had many hands, which basically was considered by scholars as *symbolic of magic and physical power*. The *kongp'o* explores similar logic. While from the point of view of rationality of a structure, the *tap'o* style is considered less defined compared to *chusim'po* style, the symbolic connotation explains the logic of the development of *kongp'o*.

The role of *kongp'o* was not only to provide a rational and sustainable structure to a building. It also organized the structure in a meaningful way. *The visual logic of a structure corresponded with the dominant perception of the universe, and particularly in association with the human body.*

The morphological concept also provides an easy explanation for the scale of Korean architecture. A human hand has a roughly fixed proportion to the human body. Some nations used the (ideal) size of the hand as a measure. The size of *do* and bracket arm *soro*, the elements of *kongp'o*, is not less important to determine the scale of a building.

Let us imagine a structure with a *soro* of one m high. We can imagine the

Kŭngjŏngjŏn Hall in Kyŏngbokkung Palace or a proportionally enlarged copy of the Muryangsujŏn of Pusŏksa Temple. It is obvious that this structure will have a cosmic, "non-human" scale. (I believe that we cannot find a structure of this scale in the history of Korean architecture).

At the same time, the lower size limit of elements of *kongp'o* was not fixed. The structure of the Buddhist shrine inside any Buddhist temple hall demonstrated a miniature of the *kongp'o*. The *soro* and *do* of the shrines are miniatures of the *soro* and *do* which were used for the buildings. To understand the reason for such a scale we have to consider the size and symbolic meaning of the Buddha image, which was placed under this structure. The image of Buddha does not correspond with the actual size of a human body but with the universe. Often the statue does not exceed the size of a human body. While the sculpture could be a modest size, its proportions in contrast to the elements of the *kongp'o* give an impression of a larger statue.

The size of the elements of *kongp'o* creates an intermediate scale between the structure and the human body. The great size of an entire structure could be realized through the small size of the *kongp'o* elements. Therefore, the *kongp'o* system provided ancient Korean architects a powerful tool to construct buildings of human scale. This tool was never misused. The human scale of ancient structures is one of the most remarkable features of traditional Korean architecture. It was achieved by means of *kongp'o*.

E. *Kongp'o* = Social Utopia?

Kongp'o as an Image of Social Harmony

Through almost 2000 years of Korean recorded history the *kongp'o* was used as a kind of architectural uniform for all public buildings. *Kongp'o* indicates the social importance of a structure. Based on the proposition that the associative and symbolic way of thinking was dominant in archaic culture, I suggest that *kongp'o* symbolically interprets social ideas. Interestingly enough, the development of the *kongp'o* styles, in terms of their symbolic connotations, has a clear correspondence with the development of the social structure of Korean society.

In this case, *chusimp'o* (the ancient style with brackets placed above the columns only) corresponds with simple social hierarchy of the Korean states of the Three Kingdoms period. It was based on an archaic clan system with the key figure of the clan leader, which can be associated with a column. Such an association can be traced in the culture of later periods when an outstanding

political figure was often called a *pillar of state*. Beginning with a simple structural scheme, *chusim'po* developed in two directions: vertically and horizontally. In the vertical direction, it was developed by adding the next layers of brackets. In the horizontal direction, it was developed by adding brackets in the intermediate space, resulting in the emerging of the *tap'o* style. The line of development is very logical and straight following the development of the administrative structures through early Korean history.

The *tap'o* style provides another symbolic interpretation of social development. The *tap'o* column corresponds with the law (or key political figures), which is a foundation of extremely sophisticated social and administrative arrangements during the late Koryŏ and Chosŏn dynasties. The huge uniform bureaucracy (brackets) and the commoners (bracket elements) shaped the monolith support of the king's power (roof), which covered the entire country (building). The increase in the number of layers of brackets corresponds with increasing stratification of Korean society and its bureaucracy.

Created on the basis of preceding styles and in another historical environment, the *ikkon* style did not incorporate the lost meanings which stood behind the older construction styles. The Chosŏn dynasty at the time of the creation of the *ikkon* departed far from myths and mythological thinking. This period may be characterized by the dominance of rational thinking. Therefore, I do not apply morphological association to the *ikkon* style²⁰. The symbolic interpretation of *ikkon* seems to be less productive.

The interpretation of the *kongp'o* system as a symbolic image of social harmony gives us a key to understanding the logic of its development. It also leads to clarification of the roots of its origin which stands beyond its pragmatic and utilitarian functions.

CONCLUSION

Buddhist temples are evidence of ancient Korean history. Their delicate dialogue with nature, human scale and elaborate decoration demonstrates the results of an attractive yet not well studied architectural system. An adequate perception of the masterpieces of Korean Buddhist architecture depends on understanding their original cultural context, which is in many ways different from the European. In this paper I tried to explore the correspondence between Buddhist architecture and traditional culture.

An ancient Taoist book *Juandzi* tells a funny story about Chaos and his friends. Chaos used to drink wine and play chess with his friends. Ugly Chaos

had no form, no mouth, eyes, etc., but his friends decided to help him and made eight holes, which every human being has (eyes, nose, mouth etc.). Unfortunately, Chaos died after this well-intentioned surgery. The meaning of the story is that should Chaos become form, he could no longer be Chaos.

Like this legend, I tried to put the complicated and semi-chaotic picture of Korean Buddhist architecture in some order, using certain simplifications and schemes. Nevertheless, I believe that this has not hurt its magic beauty.

ATTACHMENT I: COMMON STRUCTURES WITHIN BUDDHIST TEMPLE COMPOUND.

<i>Iljumun</i>	First gate of the temple One Pillar Gate (may be interpreted as One Heart or One Spirit Gate)
<i>Sach'önwangmun or Haet'almun</i>	Second Gate of the temple (Celestial Guardians Gate or Gate of the Four Heavenly Kings)
<i>Chonggak</i>	Bell pavilion Houses musical instruments used for ritual services: wooden fish, gong, bell and drum
<i>Nugak</i>	2-story pavilion, sometimes used as the third gate of the temple First floor used as a gate or passage, second had various functions including lecturing. Sometimes a belfry was built as a <i>nugak</i>
<i>T'ap</i>	Pagoda Initially was a repository for the Buddha's remains
<i>Taeungjön</i>	Buddha Shakyamuni Hall
<i>Taejokkwangjön</i>	Buddha Vairochana Hall
<i>Muryangsujön or Kŭngnakchön</i>	Hall of Paradise (Buddha Amida Hall)
<i>Mirŭkchön</i>	Buddha Maitreya Hall

<i>Kwanŭmjŏn</i>	Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara Hall
<i>Nahanjŏn or Ŭmjinjŏn</i>	Arhat Hall (Arhat - Buddhist saints)
<i>Chijangjŏn</i>	Bodhisattva Kshitigarbha Hall (For the benefit of the dead)
<i>Myŏngbujŏn or Siwangjŏn</i>	Hall of Judgement (Hall of the Dead)
<i>Chosadang</i>	Founder Pavilion
<i>P'alsangjŏn</i>	Pavilion houses eight scenes of Buddha Shakyamuni's life
<i>Sanshingak</i>	Mountain Spirit Hall
<i>Ch'ilsŏnggak</i>	Big Dipper Pavilion (Seven Stars)
<i>Kangdang</i>	Lecture Hall
<i>Sŏnwŏn</i>	Meditation Hall
<i>Hyangnogak or Inhyanggak</i>	Residence of the monks responsible for Buddhist relics and incense
<i>Yŏnghwashil or Misoshil</i>	Residence of the chief monk
<i>Sŏktŭng</i>	Stone Lantern—a symbol of Buddhist teaching

NOTES

- 1 The *Samguk Yusa* is an unofficial historical record written by the National Priest of Koryŏ Dynasty Ilyon (1206–1289).
- 2 Ilyon. *Samguk Yusa*. Translated by Ha Tae-Hung, Grafton K. Mintz. Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1972. P. 177.
- 3 Ilyon. *Op. cit.*, p.178
Kim Pusik. *Op. cit.* Vol. 2. p.59.
- 4 Kim Duk-Whang. *A History of Religions in Korea*. Seoul: Daeji Moonhwa-sa, 1988. p.108
- 5 Ilyon. *Op. cit.* pp. 143–144.
- 6 Ilyon. *ibid* p. 205.

- 7 Ilyon. *ibid.* p. 207.
- 8 Ilyon. *ibid.* p. 209.
- 9 Kim Duk-Whang. *Op. cit.* p. 116
- 10 Ilyon. *ibid.* p. 99
- 11 Kim Pusik. *Samguk sagi*. Translated and commented by Pak Michael. Moscow: Izdatelstvo vostochnoi literaturi, 1959. p.205
- 12 Ilyon. *Op. cit.*, pp.380–381. The citation is partly cut
- 13 Traditional measure unit indicating either one span (the space between two neighboring columns), or a square unit one span long and one span deep.
- 14 History of Korea. Moscow, 1960. vol. 1, pp. 176–177
- 15 *Mahāyāna* is a branch of Buddhism which spread in China, Korea and Japan.
- 16 Lee Sang-Hae. *Feng-shui: Its Context and Meaning*. Cornell University Press, 1986. p.284
- 17 L. Gurevich. *Categories of Middle Ages Culture*. Moscow, Iskusstvo, 1972.
- 18 Christian belief (Catholic church of the middle ages) is an example of “linear time” history beginning with Christ.
- 19 Pak Ŏngon. *Hanguk Kōnch’uksa kang chwa* (History of Korean Architecture). Seoul, Hongdae ch’ulp’anbu 1983. p.
- 20 I would propose to consider *chusimp’o* and *tap’o* as two stages of development of a single constructional scheme. *Tap’o* is just the last stage of the *chusimp’o* development. The *ikkon* is much more revolutionary compared to previous two. Professor Yoon Hee-sang (Sinhŭng Chōngmun University) also mentioned that the bracket systems of *chusimp’o* and *tap’o* styles are independent from the structure of the roof. The *ikkon* style brackets are integral parts of the entire building structure, where the roof can not be separated. In terms of structure, it is a serious and major deviation from previous construction methods. The symbolic incompatibility is just another reason to distinguish this style from *chusimp’o* and *tap’o* styles.

ILLUSTRATION LIST

I. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

1. Three Kingdoms Period. Typical Layout Schemes
2. Unified Shilla Period. Pulguksa Temple. Layout.
3. Koryŏ Dynasty. Hŭngwangsä Temple. Layout.
4. Chosŏn Dynasty. Haeinsa Temple. Layout.
T'ongdosa Temple. Layout.
Songgwangsä Temple. Layout.

II. PRINCIPLES OF SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT.

1. Mandala
2. Pŏmŏsa Temple Layout.

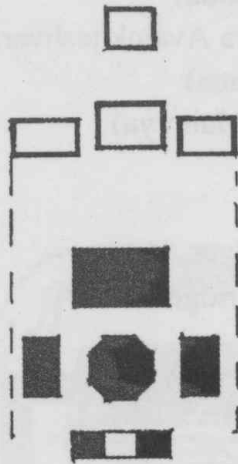
III. STRUCTURAL THEORY.

1. Kongp'o Styles
2. Architectural Isomorphism

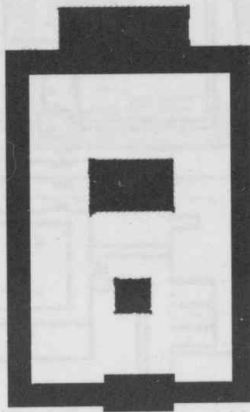
THREE KINGDOMS PERIOD

Typical Layout Schemes

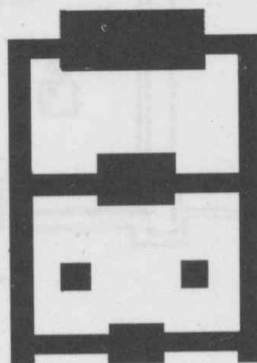
Koyguryō: Three Halls-One Pagoda



Paekche: One Hall-One Pagoda



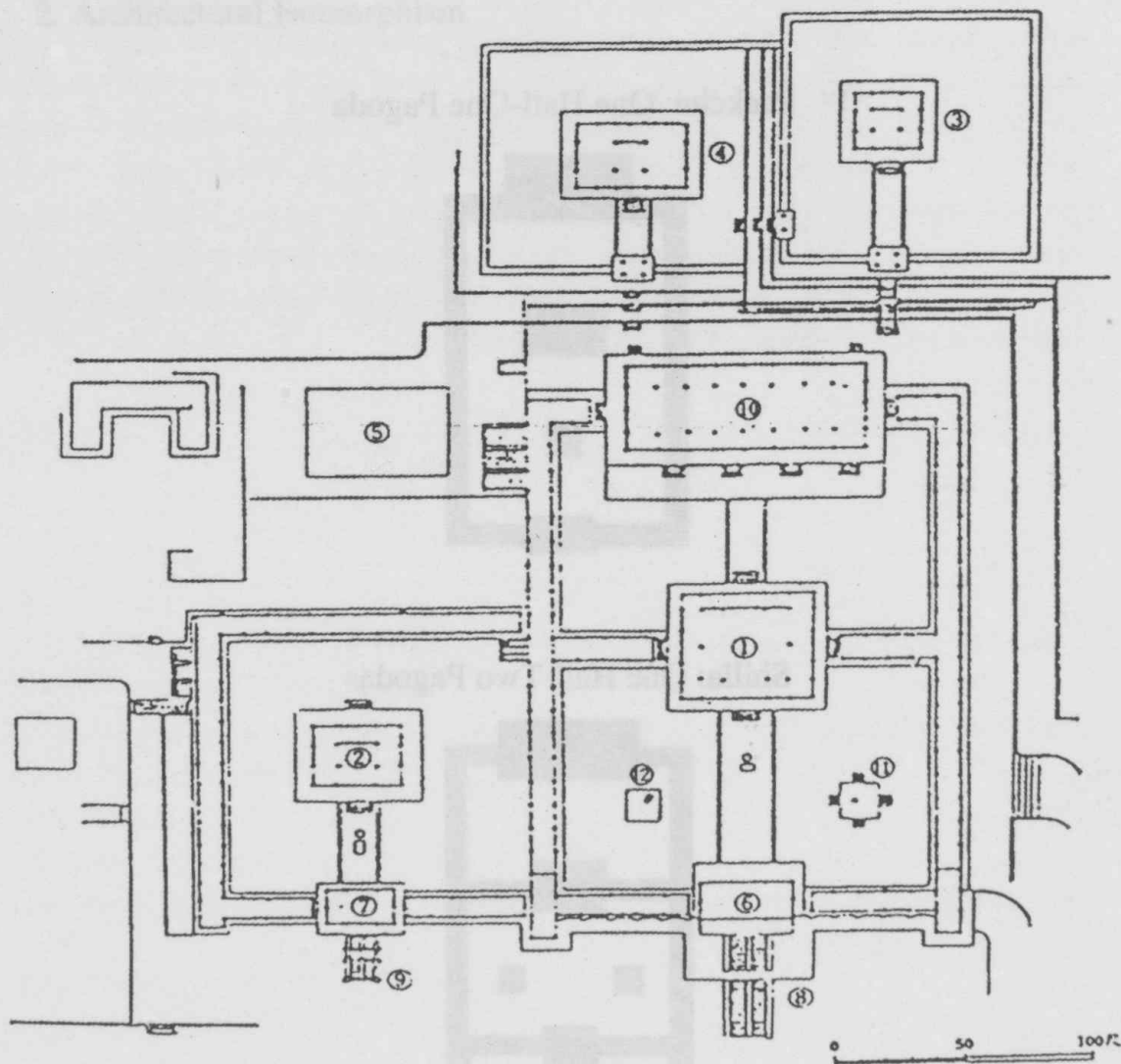
Shilla: One Hall-Two Pagodas



UNIFIED SHILLA

PULGUKSA TEMPLE

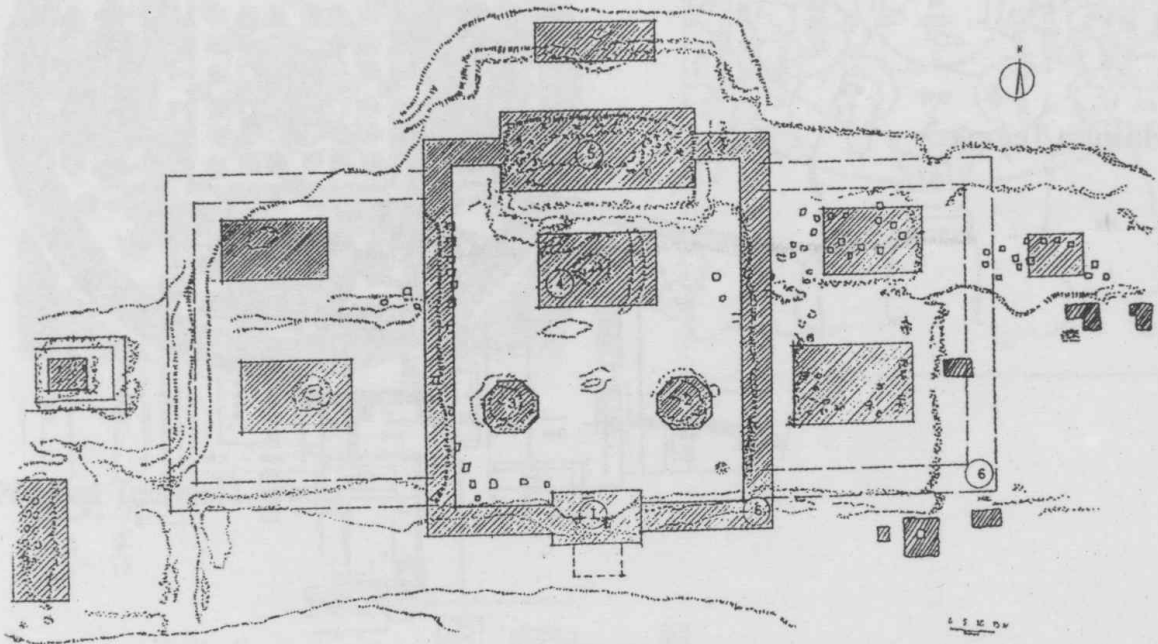
1. Taeungjŏn Hall (Buddha Shakyamuni)
2. Kŭnnakchŏn Hall (Buddha Amida)
3. Kwangŭmjŏn Hall (Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara)
4. Pirojŏn Hall (Buddha Vairochana)
5. Mirŭkchŏn Hall site (Buddha Maitreya)
6. Chahamun Gate.
7. Anyangmun Gate.
8. Paegungyo and Ch'ongun Bridges.
9. Ch'ilbogyo and Yŏnhwagyo Bridges.
10. Lecture Hall
11. Tabot'ap Pagoda.
12. Sŏkkat'ap Pagoda.



KORYŎ DYNASTY

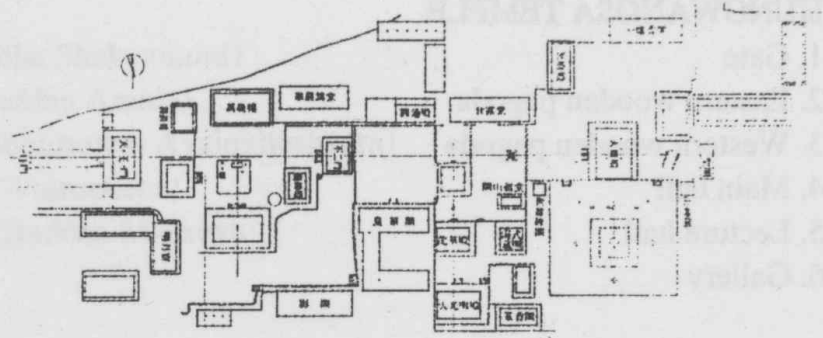
HŬNGWANGSA TEMPLE

1. Gate
2. Eastern wooden pagoda
3. Western wooden pagoda
4. Main hall
5. Lecture hall
6. Gallery

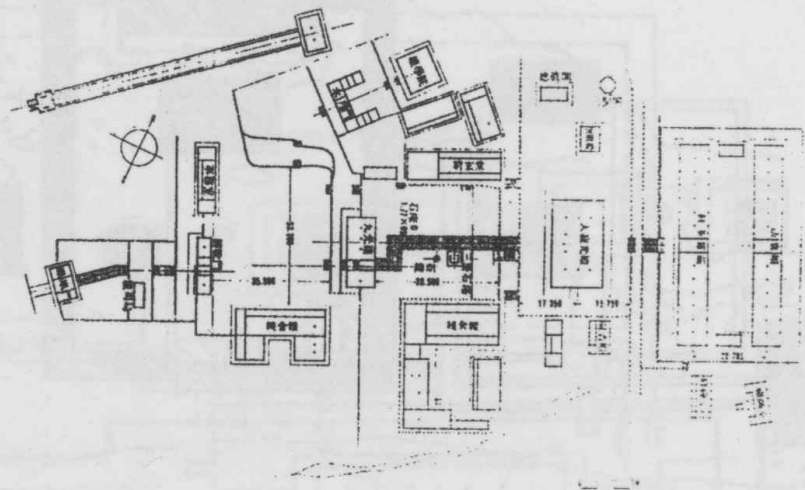


CHOSŎN DYNASTY

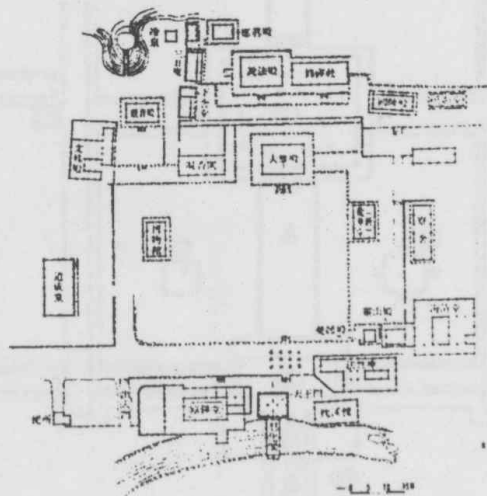
T'ongdosa Temple



Haeinsa Temple



Songgwangsa Temple



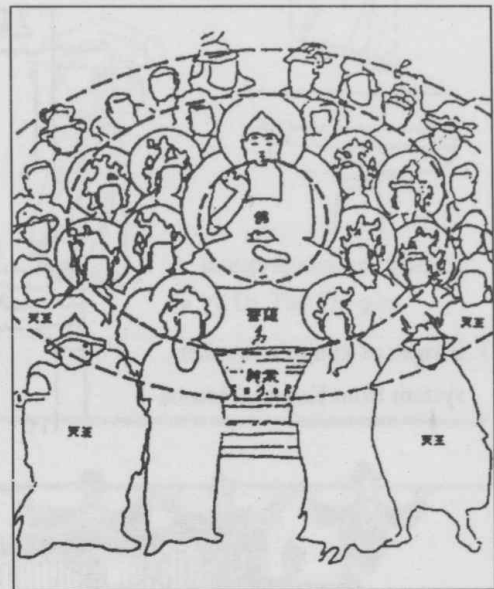
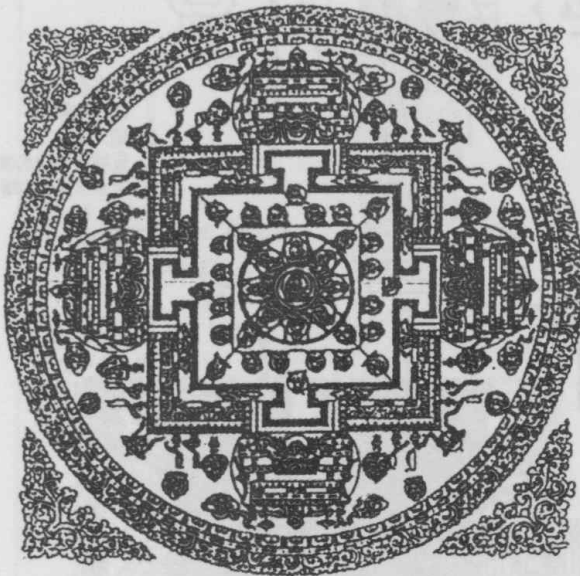
Mandala-Pictorial Scheme of Universe

Center—Buddha

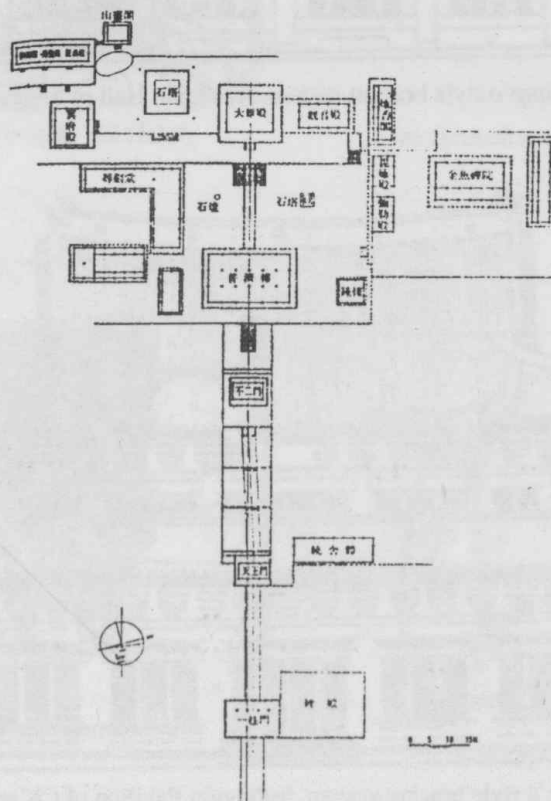
2nd level—Bodhisattvas

3rd—Arhat (Buddhist saint)

4th—other gods

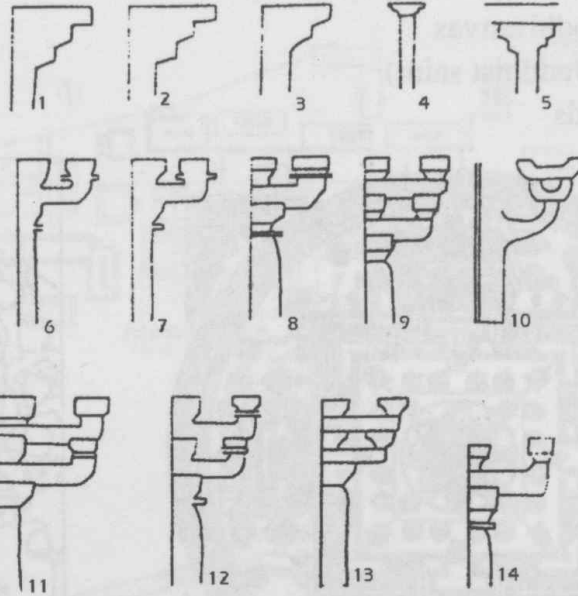


Pōmōsa Temple. Layout



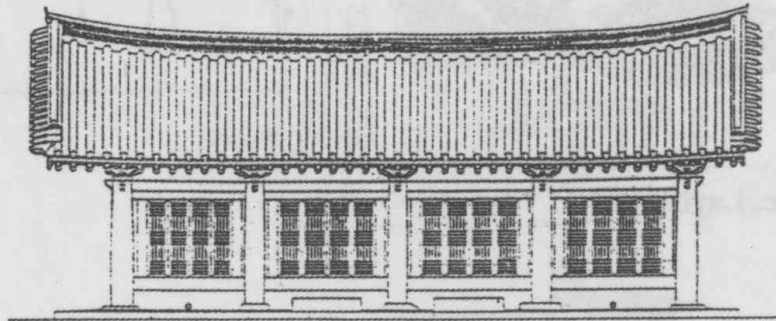
Kongp'o Styles:

(Source of drawings: Chang Gyeong-ho. Korean Traditional Architecture. Seoul: Munye ch'ulp'ansa, 1994.)

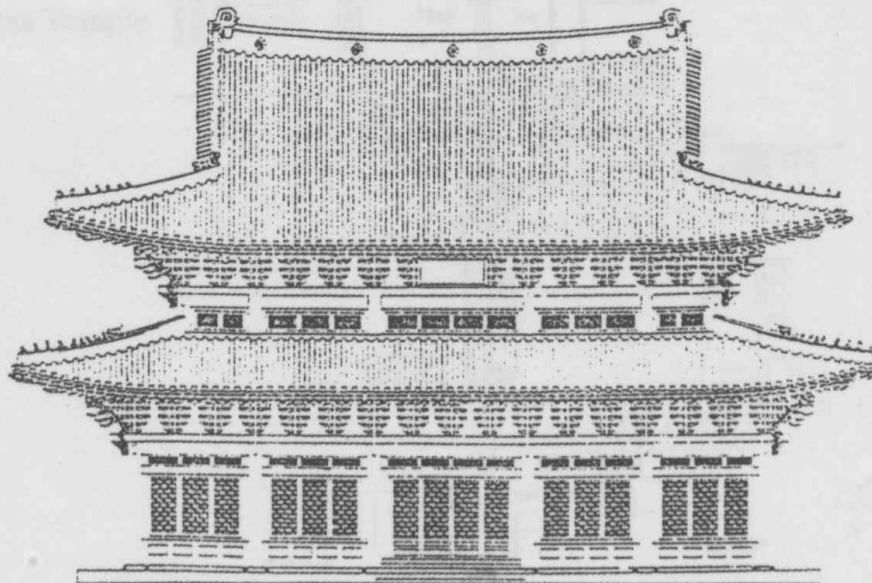


- 1. 三室塚
- 2. 散蓮花塚
- 3. 環文塚
- 4. 量城里 제2호墳
- 5. 栗水里벽화古墳
- 6. 舞·塚
- 7. 角·塚
- 8. 龜甲塚
- 9. ·神塚
- 10. 星塚
- 11. 龍岡大墓
- 12. 雙·塚
- 13. 安岳1호墳
- 14. 安岳2호墳

1. Images of kongp'o bracket system from Koguryŏ tombs



2. Sample of *chusimp'o* style bracket system. Kuksajŏn Hall of Songgwangsa Temple



3. Sample of *tap'o* style bracket system. Injŏngjŏn Pavilion of Ch'angdok Palace.

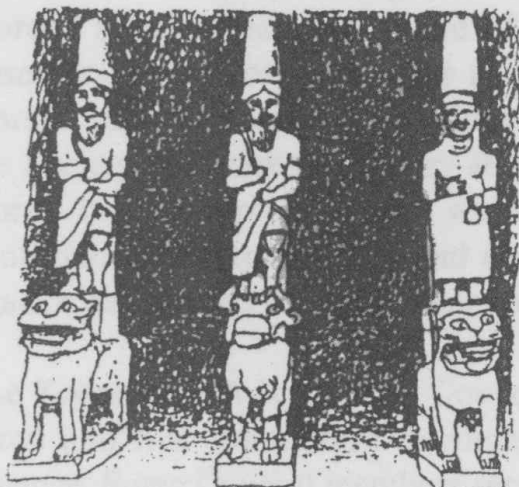
**Architectural
Isomorphism**



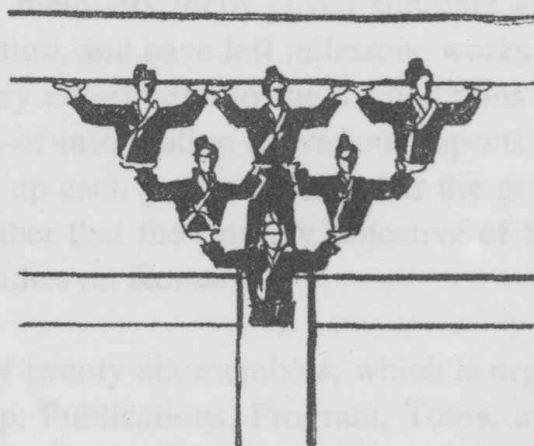
Kora. Erechtheion Temple
Athena Acropolis, Greece



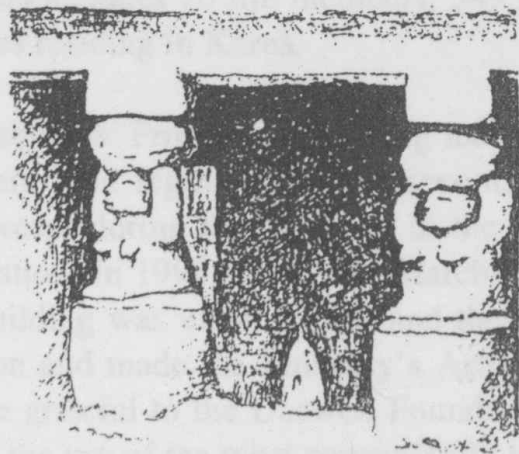
Interpretation of "konp'o"
by Dr. Pak Ŏn-gon



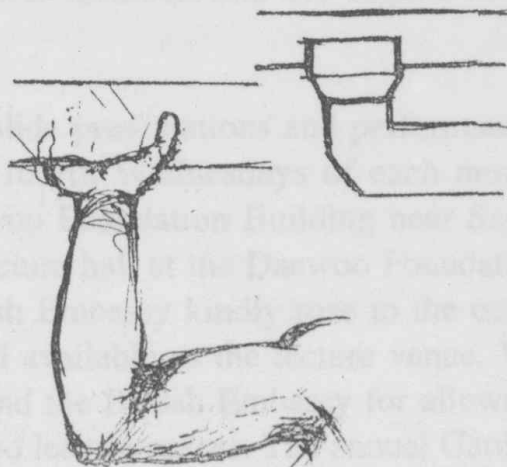
Pillars of Guzana Temple, Tel-Halaf,
X Century B.C.



Interpretation of multi-layers of "konp'o"



Caryatid, Ishede People, Dagomeya,
XX Century



Isomorphism of *soro* and human hand

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY – KOREA BRANCH
1996

The Korea branch of the Royal Asiatic Society was established in 1900 by a group of foreign residents in Korea, who sought to broaden their understanding of all aspects of Korean life, culture, customs, geography, and literature through investigative research and sharing of knowledge. The society expanded rapidly, to include foreign residents of all nationalities and a number of Korean scholars as well. Some of the members were gifted scholars and observers of the Korean heritage and culture, and have left milestone works in Korean studies. Some of the articles they contributed to the Transactions of the Society still rank as primary sources of information on various aspects of Korea. It is appropriate that as we wrap up each year we remember the great contribution of our forbears, and remember that the primary objective of the Branch remains the encouragement of studies on Korea.

The Korea Branch is run by a Council of twenty-six members, which is organized into five committees: Membership, Publications, Program, Tours, and Finance. Some Council members serve as officers of the Branch as well.

Membership: At present the RAS-Korea Branch has a total of 1492 members. This includes 70 life members, 549 overseas members and 873 regular members residing in Korea.

Programs: Programs involving lectures, slide presentations and performances were held regularly on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month (except during the summer) at the Daewoo Foundation Building near Seoul Station. In 1996 January to March the lecture hall at the Daewoo Foundation Building was under repair, and the British Embassy kindly rose to the occasion and made the Embassy's Aston Hall available as the lecture venue. We are grateful to the Daewoo Foundation and the British Embassy for allowing us the use of the most conveniently located lecture spaces. The annual Garden Party, graciously hosted by Amb. and Mrs. James Laney at the U. S. Embassy Residence, was a gala event, with approximately 300 guests attending and fea-

turing a special fashion show of ancient Korean costumes, with commentaries by Dr. Cho Won-kyong. Special sales of books and handicraft items added to the excitement and pleasure of the party.

Tours: A full schedule of tours through the year took members and other participants to all parts of Korea. A total of 1,980 members and non-members took advantage of these tours, which remain one of the most popular activities of the Society. The worsening traffic in and out of Seoul is a continuing problem, but participants showed a remarkable understanding and forbearance in putting up with traffic jams, and acknowledged the advantage buses offer over more punctual transportations such as subways and trains.

Publications: The Publications Committee had another successful year supervising book sales, reviewing manuscripts, and editing Volume 71 of the *Transactions* for publication. A revised Book List was prepared and distributed to all members and to various libraries and institutions interested in Korean Studies.

Finances: The finances of the RAS-Korea Branch continued to fare smoothly. Although operating expenses are modest, the costs are rising, and the society is totally dependent for its income on membership fees, tour fees and book sales. So, the council agonized over the issue of membership fee raise and finally reached a decision to raise the annual membership dues to 35,000 won for ordinary members, 50,000 won for couples, 25,000 won for academic members, effective the 1st of January, 1997. We appeal to all our members for their understanding for and acceptance of the increased membership fee.

I would like to take this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge the active cooperation of the Council members, Honorary Presidents Amb. Harris and Amb. Laney of the United Kingdom and the U. S. A., and of Mrs. Bae, who has been the mainstay of the RAS office for the past three decades. I would like to thank the Daewoo Foundation once again for making this auditorium available for lecture meetings free of charge, and wish all the members a very happy 1997.

Respectfully submitted,

Suh, Ji-moon
President

1995 R.A.S. Lectures

Seoul Branch

- January 11 The Buddhist Transformation of Shilla
Dr. N.M. Pankaj
- January 24 Views of Chosun Dynasty Seoul Seen Through
Buildings and Gardens of the Period
Mr. Peter Bartholomew
- February 14 Ko Un's *Hwaom-Kyong*: A Modern Korean Pilgrim's Progress
Br. Anthony of Taize (An, Son-jae)
- February 29 Syngman Rhee and the March First Movement
Dr. Lew, Young-Ik
- March 13 The Myth of Tan'gun: Is It Really Unique
Dr. James Grayson
- March 28 Korean Envoys to Tokugawa Japan: Diplomacy and
Cultural Exchange in Traditional East Asia
Dr. Yoon, Byung-nam
- April 10 Native Plants of Korea
Dr. Bang, Kwang-ja
- April 24 Introduction to Oriental Medicine in Korea
Dr. Kang, Sung-keel
- May 8 Queen Min of Korea: Coming to Power
Ms. Tatyana M. Simbirtseva
- May 22 Choson Ceramics of the 15th-16th Centuries
Dr. Kim, Young-won
- June 12 Taoism in Korea
Mr. Steven D. Jenks
- June 26 Post-Occupation and Post-War Writing by Korean Women
Ms. Jean Jin-sun Kim
- August 28 Takion: Korean Traditional Martial Art
Mr. Do, Ki-hyun
- September 11 The Seven Secrets of King Muryŏng
Dr. Kim, Young-duk

- September 25 An Anthropologist's Kwangju Notebook:
May 1980 and Sixteen Years Later
Dr. Linda Lewis
- October 9 The Public and Private Life of the Kisaeng in the Choson Period
Prof. Vincenza D'Urso
- October 23 Dialogue Between Shamanism and Buddhism in Early Korea
Prof. N.M. Pankaj
- November 9 Seal Engraving
Mr. Koh, Jae-sik
- November 27 Buddhist Architecture of Korea
Prof. Valeri D. Tian
- December 11 The Secrets of the Twenty-two *Tamno* of the Paekche Kingdom
Prof. Kim, Young-duk

1995 R.A.S. Tours

<i>Date</i>	<i>Destination</i>	<i>Attendance</i>
January 13	In-Wang San Hike	20
January 20	Buddhism Tour	24
January 27	Changdok Palace, Piwon (Secret Garden) and Yongsu-san Restaurant	16
January 28	Winter Break Tour	17
February 4	Bird Watching Tour	34
February 17-9	Lunar New Year's Tour: Sorak San National Park	45
February 20	Pukhansan National Park Hike	13
February 24	Embroidery Tour	36
March 1	Onyang Folk Museum, Hyonchung-sa and Independence Hall	14
March 2	Kiln, Parka Crystal Factory, and <i>Onggi</i> (Kimchi Jar) Factory Tour	28
March 3	Yoju Tour	22
March 9	Catholicism Tour	19
March 16	Art Tour: Galleries, Artist's Studio, and Modern Art Museum	24
March 17	<i>Walking Tour of Choson Seoul</i>	60
March 23	Wonju and Chiaksan National Park Tour	20
March 24	Soyosan, Kosokjong and Sambuyon Falls Tour	26
April 5-7	Camelia Tour: Namhae-do and Dolsan-do Tour	45
April 12-4	Chinhae Cherry Blossom Tour	74
April 19-21	Cheju-do Tour	25
April 27	Kanghwa Island Tour	42
April 27-8	Magnolia Tour: Ch'ollipo	28
April 28	Taedong Kut (Shaman Ritual)	80
May 4-5	Kyongju Tour	35
May 5	Chongmyo Ceremony	50
May 11	Flower Tour	26
May 12	Paekche Kingdom Tour: Puyo and Kongju	30
May 18	Sudok-sa (Toksan Provincial Park) and Haemi Village	24
May 18-9	Andong and Hahoe Village Tour	21

May 20-2	Chiri-san National Park, Chungmu and Koje-do Tour	30
May 22	Kiln Tour	40
May 23	Taejŏn, Expo Park Tour	24
May 24	Buddha's Birthday Tour	102
May 26	Kwangnung, Sanjŏng Lake Tour	22
May 31	Wando and Pokildo Tour	14
June 6	Pyok-Je and Environs Tour	23
June 8-9	Kangnung and East Coast Tour	17
June 14-6	Hongdo and Huksan-do Tour	21
June 15	Traditional Music and Dance Tour	20
June 22	R.A.S. Garden Party-96th Anniversary	250
June 23	Exotic Shrine Tour	17
June 30	Soyangho and Paroho Boat Tour	23
July 6-7	Chŏlla-do Tour	20
July 14	Songnisan and Popchu-sa Tour	18
July 20	Triple Treat Tour: Olympic Park, Han River Cruise and the DLI 63 Building	19
July 21	Tanyang Tour: Kosu Cave	21
July 27	Island Hopping Tour	20
August 10	Inwang-san Hike	24
August 10	Art Galleries, Insadong and Sanch'on Vegetarian Restaurant Tour	20
August 15	Hyonch'ung-sa, Onyang Folk Museum and Independence Hall Tour	20
August 18	Paekche Kingdom Tour	19
August 24	Market Tour	23
September 1	Mallipo/ Ch'ollipo Tour	40
September 7	Silk Tour	42
September 8	Ch'ongp'yong Boat Tour	40
September 14	Kiln and Crystal Factory Tour	24
September 15	Yongwol and Chiak-san Tour	24
September 21-2	South Cholla "Land of Exile" Tour	35
September 26-8	Chusok Holiday: Sorak-san National Park Tour	45
October 3	Kangwha Island and Songmo-do Tour	21
October 5-6	Kyongju tour	31

October 11-3	Ch'ungmu and Koje Island Tour	34
October 17-21	Tour to Kyushu, Japan	18
October 19-20	Chiri-san Tour	31
October 26	Sudok-sa (Toksan Provincial Park)	35
November 2-3	Andong/ Hahoe Tour	88
November 10	Walking Tour of Choson Seoul	50
November 16	Hanyak Tour	23
November 23	Kimchi Tour	22
November 30	Churches Around Seoul Tour	11
December 1	Inner Sorak Tour	13
December 14	Traditional Artist's Studio Tour	27

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