*The Imch'ǒnggak, Neo-Confucian Aesthetics,*

*and* Architecture Parlante

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

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I. **Introduction**

The term “*architecture parlante*” (“narrative” architecture) was coined to describe the architectural philosophy of French Neo-Classical architect, Claude-Nicholas Ledoux (1736 - 1806), an architect who gained fame under the regime of Louis XV.[[1]](#footnote-1) Ledoux’s first significant, public commission was for the Royal Salt-works at Arc-et-Sénans near Besançon, France, in the early 1770’s. For this commission, Ledoux came to envision a “perfect” circular city, which he named Chaux (Fig. 1).[[2]](#footnote-2) Ledoux introduced the concept of *architecture parlante* through the conceptual premise of his architectural designs for the proposed city of Chaux. Under this concept, architecture was to be designed so as to express, or “speak,” to the intended function of the structure. Some of Ledoux’s notable plans include buildings such as the River Inspector’s Residence that straddles the River Loue and the *Oikema*: a four-storied building “devoted to sex education as a preparation for marriage,” shaped like a phallus (Fig 2, 3).[[3]](#footnote-3) Ledoux not only designed the salt-works factory to express an “ideal” city (in this case, perfection being represented by a geometrically precise circle), but he also paid close attention to the design of other buildings, such as residences and theaters, that would contribute to and enrich urban life.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The concept of *architecture parlante* is seen as inherited and further elaborated in the works of later Neo-Classical architects, such as Etienne-Louis Boullée (1728 - 1799).[[5]](#footnote-5) The spherical, globe-shaped design for the Newton Memorial (Cénotaphe de Newton) has received considerable attention among Boullée’s Enlightenment-inspired designs (Fig. 4).[[6]](#footnote-6) As homage to the physicist’s discovery of gravity, the cenotaph’s “armillary sphere” is based on Copernicus’ heliocentric system, and is an expression of speaking architecture.[[7]](#footnote-7) Through their essays and designs, Boullée and Ledoux envisioned architecture as speaking to its crucial function as a socio-cultural space, but also to the vision and ideas unique to the architect himself.[[8]](#footnote-8) Although these ideas flourished, the resulting architectural plans never became realized as tangible monuments, and only the published texts and illustrations of Boullée and Ledoux remain.[[9]](#footnote-9)

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

This paper will examine the concept of “*architecture parlante*” in relation to how it conveys the perceived value and purpose of the Chinese writing system on part of the residents of the Imch’ǒnggak. Specifically, the focus will be on how particular Neo-Confucian ideologies and socio-cultural notions of status are communicated through the choice to use Chinese characters, as well as the attribution of specific Chinese characters to distinct quarters within this residence.

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

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

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

With regards to its spatial arrangement, *hanok* are built based upon a modular system of units called bays. These units are combined to make up quarters, such as the *anch'ae* (안채), which are the inner/family quarters, the *sarangch’ae* (舍廊–, 사랑채)[[13]](#footnote-13) known as the “male quarters” where guests would be received, and the *haengnangch’ae* (行廊–,행랑채) that served as the servants’ quarters. Upper class residences would usually have the ancestral shrine stand as a separate building on the residential grounds, but other quarters such as warehouses, granaries and libraries could also be built on site depending on the preference of the residents. In the case of the Imch’ǒnggak, the *anch’ae*, *sarangch’ae* and the *haengnangch’ae* constitute the domestic complex of the residence. At the Imch’ǒnggak, in addition to an ancestral shrine there is also a separate pavilion called the Kunjajǒng (君子亭,군자정) that served as a bureaucratic office.

Aside from the architectural elements of this residence, it is important to understand its historic context. Founded after the fall of the Koryǒ Dynasty (918-1392), the Chosǒn Dynasty was marked by an ideological shift from Buddhism to Neo-Confucianism, as defined by Southern Song philosophers such as Zhu Xi (960-1279). Subsequently a meritocracy was established, and Korea adopted the civil examination system from China. This allowed local officials and landowners to gain more political and social influence and climb up to the level of the select aristocratic families that held power in the Koryǒ Dynasty.[[14]](#footnote-14) Under the new Neo-Confucian system, academic knowledge became a powerful tool. Men distinguished by their academic achievements and scholarly education grounded in Classical Chinese literature rose up the ranks of the bureaucracy. Thus, the Chosǒn Dynasty heralded the development of what became known as “literati” culture on the Korean Peninsula, and, to this day, famous Neo-Confucian scholars T’oegye Yi Hwang (退溪 李滉,퇴계 이황) and Yulgok Yi I (栗谷 李珥,율곡 이이) are recognized as distinguished individuals in Chosǒn Dynasty history. Both literati philosophers are printed on Korean banknotes along with King Sejong (世宗, 세종) (r. 1418-1450), who invented the Korean writing system known as *Hangǔl* (한글). Yi Myǒng, a high official in the Chosǒn Dynasty government would have been a literati himself, and, therefore, it is quite feasible that a Sinitic cultural tendency influenced the architectural choices he made in building the Imch’ǒnggak.

III. **Architectural Parlance in the Domestic and Civic Realm**

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

Setting the *hangǔl* architectural formation myth aside, the Imch’ǒnggak residence offers a very compelling evidence for the incorporation of Chinese characters into architecture. Upon a cursory look at the floor plan of the residence (Fig. 8), it is clear that none of the *hanok* on site is shaped in the *hangǔl* characters listed earlier. As a matter of fact, the domestic complex to the West, which is comprised of the *anch’ae*, *sarangch’ae* and *haengnangch’ae*, is intentionally shaped in the form of the Chinese character 用 (용, yong) which indicates utility.[[17]](#footnote-17) The character can be recognized when read on a west to east vertical orientation.[[18]](#footnote-18) While the choice of this character with regards to its meaning might seem a suitable in itself for this domestic complex that implies the collaboration and cooperation between the dichotomy of ‘men and women,’ ‘master and servant,’ there is a second, underlying meaning. According to the updated clan records[[19]](#footnote-19), the character 用 itself was conceived of as a visual overlay of the Chinese characters for sun and moon, namely 日 and 月 respectively (Fig. 9).[[20]](#footnote-20)

The formation of the domestic complex seems to have two layers of meaning – firstly that of the character 用 itself, that embodies the ideology of productivity, and secondly, that of the combination of sun and moon that symbolizes the wholesome and symbiotic relationship between the two energies as represented by the men and women of the household.[[21]](#footnote-21) The sun and moon can be interpreted as Daoist concepts of the female 陰 (yin) and male 陽 (yang) energies respectively (Fig.10). Figure 10 most succinctly summarizes this philosophy, where the yin is correlated with black, and the yang with the white. It can be seen that both energies are in constant flux and balanced out by the quality of its opposite (Fig. 10).

In the context of Zhu Xi’s Neo-Confucianism, Daoist and Buddhist theories were borrowed to provide a metaphysical grounding for the earlier Confucian teachings. By incorporating elements of competing philosophies, Zhu Xi was able to formulate new concepts of 氣 (qi), the vital force that constitutes all matter in the physical world, and 理 (li), the principle that regulates these forces in an orderly manner.[[22]](#footnote-22) This theoretical framework established by Zhu Xi is adopted into the creation of the domestic complex at Imch’ǒnggak. While the architectural complex implicitly connotes the co-existence of men and women through the structurally combined spaces of the female *anch’ae* quarter, and the male *sarangch’ae* quarter, and the gender- neutral *haengnangch’ae,* the visual synthesis of the two characters for sun and moon further emphasizes this notion and grounds these social concepts in nature. Chinese characters are used not only to embody the concept these relationships, but also act as their visual manifestation. Given the architectural practice of the time, where the builders were carpenters and not architectural designers in their own right, the layout of the domestic complex would have been directed by Yi Myǒng himself, perhaps with the input of other family members, friends, and acquaintances.

The bureaucratic pavilion, Kunjajǒng, built in the seventeenth century, is also shaped after a Chinese character. When presented on a north to south vertical axis, it reads like one of the *hangǔl* vowel symbols, ㅏ[[23]](#footnote-23). However, when read from a west to east vertical axis, the Chinese character 丁 (정,chǒng) presents itself.[[24]](#footnote-24) This particular character symbolizes the fourth of the ten celestial stems, which correlates to the element of fire and the southern direction. The choice of this Chinese character seems to indicate how the men of the Kosong Yi Clan were a part of the larger system of Neo-Confucian literati, and of the cycle of the celestial and earthly universe itself. The fourth stem 丁, in particular, is also affiliated with the Yin female energy, which balances out the predominantly male Yang energies of fire and the South. Even in this exclusively male pavilion that was reserved for official meetings and leisurely literati gatherings, the same philosophy employed in the construction of the domestic complex is expressed using a different Chinese character.

IV. **Literati Legitimization through Chinese Poetry**

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

Imch’ǒnggak (臨淸閣, 임청각) was a name given by Korea’s first renowned Neo-Confucian philosopher, T’oegye Yi Hwang,[[25]](#footnote-25) and was derived from the following excerpt in Tang Dynasty poet, Tao Yuanming’s (陶淵明) poem, “Returning Home.”

登東皋以舒嘯 臨清流而賦詩

동쪽 언덕에 올라 길게 휘파람 불고 맑은 시냇가에서 시를 읊조린다

I climb along the eastern hill and give a long whistle on the top, compose a poem *by a clear stream*.[[26]](#footnote-26)

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

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

For a scholar such as Yi Hwang, Tao Yuanming’s poem would have been the most suitable literary source from which to derive inspiration for the name of this residence, because Chinese poetry from the Han to Tang dynasties was considered one of the highest literary forms after historic records.[[27]](#footnote-27) As the godfather of the residence, Yi Hwang himself wrote the calligraphy for the wooden name plaque that now hangs inside the bureaucratic pavilion (Fig. 12). The active participation of a famous Neo-Confucian scholar in naming the residence would have called for literati standards of cultural practice that based itself upon the Chinese script and literature. As literary historian Peter H. Lee notes “…the entrenched literati [used] the official [Neo-Confucian] ideology as ‘an instrument of class domination, legitimization, and social mystification.’”[[28]](#footnote-28) By actively incorporating literati practice into the creation and conceptualization of the residence, Yi Myǒng made sure that the Imch’ǒnggak would embody the bureaucratic, academic, cultural and social status of the Kosǒng Yi Family.

V. **Summary and Conclusion**

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

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

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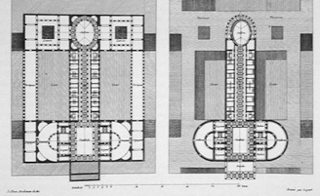


Figure 3: House of the Surveyors of the River Loue.

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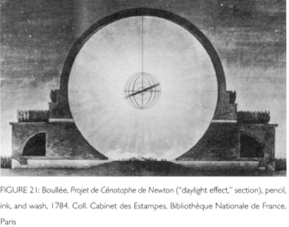


Figure 4: Cénotaphe de Newton

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Figure 5: Map of Andong in Relation to the Korean Penninsula

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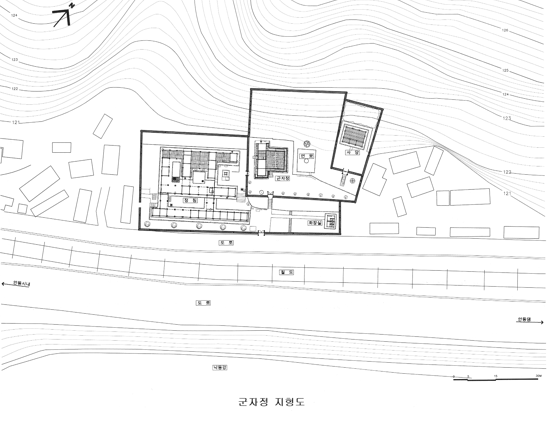


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*(A booklet written and published by the current head of the Imchǒnggak household)*

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

   *\**All translations are my own unless otherwise noted. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Claude Nicolas Ledoux, *L'architecture Considérée Sous Le Rapport De L'art, Des Moeurs Et De La Législation*, 2nd ed. (Nördlingen [Germany]: Alfons Uhl, 1984). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Helen Rosenau, “Claude Nicholas Ledoux,” *The Burlington Magazine for Conoisseurs*, 88:520 (1946), 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Mona Ozouf, “Architecture et urbanisme: L'image de a ville chez Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, “ *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 21e Année, 6 (1966), 1274. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Emil Kaufmann, “Étienne-Louis Boullée,” *The Art Bulletin*, 21: 3 (1939), 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Etienne Louis Boullée, *Architecture, Essai Sur L'art* (Paris: Hermann). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Paula Young-Lee, “Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: Boullée's "Atlas" Facade for the Bibliothèque du Roi,“ *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 57:4 (1998), 421. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. In Boullée’s introduction to *Architecture: Essai sur L’Art,* he elevates architecture as the form of art that provides the most immediate benefits in terms of its function to protect man and the existence of society, but also as a space where all other cultural arts can be conceived of and develop (En effet, l’architecture est de tous les arts celui qui procure à l’homme les avantages les plus immédiats...l’homme lui doit sa conservation; la société son existence; tous les arts leur naissance et leurs développements...). For further reference, please consult: Etienne Louis Boullée, *Architecture, Essai Sur L'art* (Paris: Hermann, 1968), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Emil Kaufmann, “Claude-Nicholas Ledoux, Inaugurator of a New Architectural System,” *The Journal of the American Society of Architectural Historians*, 3:3 (1943), 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. In his introduction to *L'architecture Considérée Sous Le Rapport De L'art, Des Moeurs Et De La Législation*, Ledoux bemoans the typical disposition of the architect, “The architect is almost always embarrassed about the idea, the dimension, the point of view; the same framework is rarely at his disposal (L’Architecte est presque toujours gêné sur la pensée, la dimension, le point de vue; le cadre même est rarement à sa disposition.), and who, if he is able to overcome such obstacles, could “subject the world to the desires of novelty that provoke the sublime dangers of imagination (...il peut assujettir le monde entier aux desirs de la nouveauté qui provoque les hazard sublimes de l'imagination). For further reference, please consult: Claude Nicolas Ledoux, *L'architecture Considérée Sous Le Rapport De L'art, Des Moeurs Et De La Législation*. 2nd ed. (Nördlingen [Germany]: Alfons Uhl, 1984) 28-29. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Hang-Jeung Yi, *Imchǒnggak*. (Andong, 2010), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. This initial definition of *hanok* and the subsequent discussion of its various architectural and structural elements is knowledge that the author compiled in collaboration with Peter Bartholomew and Sol Jung from the summer of 2008 to the summer of 2010, through on-site field surveys and interviews in South Korea. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Note that the term 사랑 (舍廊) actually refers to the management of activities. Since men were most commonly in charge of households, the projected term “male quarters” has remained popular in defining the space. However, one must not discount the possibility of women using the space for management of affairs as well. For more information on the role of women and property management, please consult: Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*, Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1992. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Yi Tae Jin, "Historical Functions of Korean Neo-Confucianism: A Proposal for its Revaluation." *Upper-Class Culture in Yi-Dynasty Korea*, by Kukche Munhwa Chaedan, Chungbo p'an., Korean culture series 2 (Seoul, Korea: International Cultural Foundation, 1980), 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. David J Nemeth, *The Architecture of Ideology: Neo-Confucian Imprinting on Cheju Island, Korea*, University of California publications in geography v. 26 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Sangbong Ryu (Head of household, Yangjindang Ibamgotaek of Hahoe Village in Andong), in discussion with the author, August 22, 2010. (http://www.orientalarchitecture.com/koreasouth/hahoe/yangjindang.php) [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Yi, Hang-Jeung, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Jang Baec-Kie and Cho Sung-Ki in "A Study on the Meaning of Letter-Shaped House Plan and Housing Principles of the Imchonggak in Andong (Andong Imch'ǒnggak ǔi munja hyǒngt'ae e natanan ǔimi wa taekpǒp e kwanhan yǒngu)." *Kǒnch'uk yǒksa yǒngu,* Vol. 10 3:27 (2001), 25-43, question the theory that the Imch'ǒnggak's domestic quarters is a direct reference to the Chinese character, 用, since the current layout does not exactly appear like the character, due to two connective bays between the haengnangch'ae and the anch'ae that are missing. They do consider, however, the possibility that the layout is meant to look like a calligraphic variation of 用. However, it is important to consider that originally the Imch'ǒnggak domestic quarters had 50 bays, and that this was reduced to 48 bays in subsequent years during the process of repair and reconstruction. One can postulate that the original 50 bay design would have made the living quarters look like the complete written form of 用. (For further reference please consult: Soon-yong Jang, "Ancient Architecture in Korea: Andong, Imchongkak (Hankuk kokǒnch'uk: Andong Imch'ǒnggak chǒngjǒn mit Kunjajǒng)," *Wǒlgan kǒnch'uk munhwa,*41 (1984), 75.) Lastly, the configuration of Imch'ǒnggak from a spatial standpoint has been discussed as the result of a functional composition of modular forms arranged so as to accommodate a large upper class family. Perhaps the modification from 50 to 48 bays might be explained by economic and structural reasons, rather than philosophical or philological concerns (For further reference, please consult: Jee-Hyun Oh and Jin-Kyoon Kim, "A Study on the Spatial Composition of Andong Imch'onggak (Andong Imch'ǒnggak ǔi konggan kusǒng é kwanhan yǒngu)," T*aehan kǒnch'uk haksa Haksul palp'yo nonmun munjip*, 2:2 (2000), 601-604.) [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Hang-Jeung Yi, *Imch’ǒnggak*. (Andong, 2010), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. The overlay of Chinese characters as presented in Figure 9, was first noted by Murayama Chijin (村山智順) in *Chōsen no Fūsui*, (Keijyō: Chōsensōtokufu; Tokyō: Kokushokankōkai), 1972. Murayama discussed this layout as a direct representation of a Korean p'ungsu theory, although Jang Baec-Kie and Cho Sung-Ki have refuted this as being unfounded in any written documentation of Korean p'ungsu practices or ideology. As mentioned in Footnote 17, Jang and Cho also have issue with the appearance of the layout not having the exact appearance of 用. In this paper, I am adopting Murayama's proposed layout configuration solely as a visual example, and not to support his views on Korean p'ungsu. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. In their article, Jang Baec-Kie and Cho Sung-Ki, do not consider how gendered space within the domestic quarters might influence and be expressed by the layout. Starting with Murayama's theory, and including those of other Korean scholars as well as Jang and Cho's, the general consensus seems to be that what is being conveyed through the architecture is Neo Confucian, patriarchal and thus exclusive to men. While it is true that the Chosǒn Dynasty had a patriarchal society, one cannot discount the role of women in the socio-cultural context of the time, and it is unlikely that the yangban ignored this aspect (For further reading on women in the Chosǒn Dynasty, please consult: Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*, Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1992.) Therefore, taking into consideration the feminine and masculine spaces of the anch'ae and sarangch'ae that comprise the domestic quarters, the visual overlay as seen in Figure 9 can be seen as representative of Daoist ideology of yin and yang, rather than a dubious reference to a tenet of Korean p'ungsu. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Xi Zhu, *Reflections on Things at Hand: The Neo-Confucian Anthology*, Records of civilization, sources and studies no. 75 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. In combination with a consonant this vowel indicates an “ah” sound. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Yi, Hang-Jeung, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. It is important to note that Yi Hwang was not a member the Goseong Yi Clan. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The excerpt and the corresponding Korean and English translations were transcribed from an informational plaque that was outside the residential compound of the Imchǒnggak. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *A History of Korean Literature* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Ibid., 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Nemeth, *The Architecture of Ideology*, 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)