

Special Feature

The Symbols and Cultural Implications of the Court Music of the Joseon Dynasty

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Introduction

Joseon Korea, from its founding, adopted Neo-Confucianism as its state ideology and pursued a ruling of virtue under which the people are governed by *ye* (禮 propriety) and *ak* (樂 music) rather than by politics and punishment. Propriety and music served as the two pillars of the political order, with the former being the principle of order and the latter of harmony in a state. As music was an essential political means of operating the royal court, court music of the Joseon dynasty was more than just an object of appreciation. It played a functional role in various ritual occasions and was produced and performed in the forms suitable for the characteristics and class of each ritual. Yet, music was not played for all court rituals. It was performed selectively depending on the characteristics and class of rites. In other words, court music was used selectively for the purposes and scales of rites. Regulations on the use of music were stated in ritual texts, which focus on the practice of *oryeui* (the five state rites 五禮儀) and thus music was performed as prescribed in these regulations. Court music for the five state rites underwent change over time, which can be confirmed by analysis of related documents.

This paper focused on the symbolic and cultural aspects of court music. Given that it has been written for foreign scholars to give a better understanding of Joseon court music, it took more general approach to the subject rather than raising new or contested issues.

Overview of Court Music of the Joseon Dynasty

The five state rites of Joseon, or *oryeui*, are as follows: *gillye* (sacrificial rites), *garye* (*joui* and festive rites), *billye* (rites for envoys), *gullye* (military rites), and *hyungnye* (funerals). These rites were accompanied by many related items and among them, music was used selectively in important rites such as sacrificial, ceremonial, and banquet events.

Ritual music was chosen based on the class and procedure of each occasion as well as on the hierarchical differences of participants like between king and crown prince or king and subject. Music was also decided by the purposes of rites. For example, music played at *johoe* (morning court assembly 朝會) and *jocham* (regular morning court assembly 朝參) was different each other and

the same was true of the final stages of civil state examinations and military examination, and rites for Chinese envoys and Japanese envoys.

Classification of Joseon Court Music

Court music of Joseon can generally refer to music played at the royal court but more accurately it refers to music officially performed at *oryeui*. It is divided into *jeryeak* (sacrificial music 祭禮樂) and *yeollyeak* (ceremonial music 宴禮樂).

Sacrificial music (*jeryeak*)

This type of music was played at *gillye* (sacrificial rites 吉禮) of the five state rites, which includes *wonguje* (the rite to heaven), *sajikje* (the rite for the soil and grain deities), *jongmyoje* (the rite for the royal ancestors), *munmyoje* (the rite for Confucius), *seonnongje* (the rite for agriculture deities), and *seonjamje* (the rite for the sericulture deity). Sacrificial rites were categorized into three: *daesa* (a large-size rite), *jungsa* (a medium-size rite), and *sosa* (a small-size rite). All the large-scale rites and some of middle-scale ones were accompanied by music while at small-scale rites, no music was played.

Certain musical pieces were reserved for each sacrificial rite as the same music was prohibited from being played at different rites. Instruments were also arranged differently for each rite. While other ritual events were held irregularly, sacrificial rites were regular ones. Therefore, it can be said that sacrificial music is representative of Joseon court music. More details of it will be given in the following chapter under the title of “Sacrificial Rites and Music: Displaying the Royal Legitimacy and Authority” in this paper.

Ceremonial music (*yeollyeak*)

This type of music was for royal banquets and other rites except for sacrificial ones. Namely, it collectively refers to music played at *garye* (festive rites), *billye* (rites for envoys), *gullye* (military rites), and *hyungnye* (funerals), excluding *gillye* (sacrificial rites). Though national funerals were accompanied by music, but it was not actually played. Therefore, *yeollyeak* actually refers to music performed at *garye*, *billye*, and *gullye*.

Yeollyeak is different from *yeonhyangak*, a genre for royal banquets in

that the former was used in non-festive royal rites such as *johoe* and *jocham*. Therefore, it is the larger concept to embrace *yeonhyangak* and serves as one of two pillars of court music with sacrificial music.

Yeollyeak can be divided into three: *jouiak*, *yeonhyangak*, and *gochwiaek* depending on the purpose and type of occasions. *Jouiak* refers to music played at royal rituals such as *johoe* and *hoerye*; *yeonhyangak* is music for court banquet; and *gochwiaek* for royal processions. They do not have their own specific repertoire, which means musical pieces were shared each other. Just as “Yeomillak” (Enjoyment with the People) was performed at the morning court assembly, banquets, or at the king’s procession, repertoires could be shared among the rites (Lim 2014, 120).

Gochwiaek refers to music performed inside the court, namely in the courtyard (*jeonjeong*) or at the entrance to the court (*jeonhu*) as well as outside the court at important events such as the king’s processions as a marching orchestra. *Jeonjeong gochwui* and *jeonhu gochwui* were for rituals inside the court while *jeonbu gochwui* and *hubu gochwui* were for events outside the court. Only *gochwiaek* played by a marching ensemble (also called *daechwita*) has been handed down to the present, with music performed in the courtyard or at the court entrance (Figures 1-5) missing. For this reason, the term *gochwiaek* refers only to music by a processional ensemble today.

Types and Characteristics of Royal Orchestras of Joseon

In the Joseon court, there were royal orchestras in charge of playing music at important rituals. They are classified as two, one for sacrificial rites and the other for ceremonial events. It is often explained that *deungga* (upper terrace ensemble) and *heonga* (lower terrace ensemble) were performed only at sacrificial rites but in fact, they were also used at royal banquets, which is *yeonhyangak*.

As mentioned above, *deungga* and *heonga* were performed at royal banquets as well as at sacrificial rites. When *heonga* was performed at royal banquets, it was called *jeonjeong heonga* 殿庭軒架. With this, there were several other orchestras for royal rituals: *jeonjeong gochwui* 殿庭鼓吹, *deungga* 登歌, *jeonhu gochwui* 殿後鼓吹, *jeongbu gochwui* 前部鼓吹, and *hubu gochwui* 後部鼓吹. Blind musicians (*gwanhyeon maengin*) and female performers (*yeogi*) were also summoned for such rites. The use of these orchestras became the norm within the Confucian ruling framework and they were performed selectively depending

on the purpose and class of rituals.

Regulations on the use of royal orchestras can be found in ritual books such as *Gukjooryeui* (*Five Rites of State* 國朝五禮儀) and *Chungwantongo* (*Comprehensive Study of the Ministry of Rites* 春官通考) and music books such as *Akhakgwebeom* (*Guide to the Study of Music* 樂學軌範). For example, *jeonbu gochwui* and *hubu gochwui* ensembles were arranged in the processions of the king or crown prince and at *naeyeon* (banquets for female guests), female performers or blind musicians were performed (Shin 1995; Jang 1974). As such, royal orchestras and musical performers had their own occasions assigned to perform (Lim 2014, 120-23).

The difference between *jeonjeong heonga* and *jeonhu gochwui*

Jeonjeong heonga was a kind of royal ensemble placed in the courtyard (*jeonjeong*) and played music at various rituals and banquets. The name makes itself distinctive from *heonga* for sacrificial rites. *Jeonjeong heonga* played a contributing role of the establishment of a new court music tradition away from *aak*, the Chinese court rite music, which prevailed until the reign of King Sejong.

Jeonjeong heonga was played alternately with *jeonhu gochwui* when the king departed from and returned to the court. *Jeonhu gochwui* was placed outside the court to play during the time from the king’s dismounting from the palanquin to his entering the palace. When the king went into the palace, *jeonjeong heonga* began to play, which lasted until he ascended to the throne. As such, the two ensemble each had a distinctive role at ritual events (Figure 1).

The difference between *jeonjeong heonga*, *jeonjeong gochwui*, and *deungga*

Jeonjeong heonga was clearly distinctive from *jeonjeong gochwui* and *deungga*. The former was used for the five state rites excluding *gillye* (sacrificial rites), that is, *garye* (festive rites), *bilbye* (rites for envoys), *gullye* (military rites), and *hyungnye* (funerals). *Jeonjeong gochwui* played only at *garye* rituals whose class was lower than those accompanied by *jeonjeon heonga*. In short, *jeonjeong heonga* was the leading orchestra throughout the Joseon period while *jeonjeong gochwui* was used for less important rituals.

Meanwhile, *deungga* was used for two different types of rituals, sacrificial and festive ones, though the same name was used for both. The ensemble

for festive events was in charge of playing music for court dance during royal banquets and thus presented only at *garye* (festive rites) and *billye* (rites for envoys).

Since *aak* was introduced to Goryeo from Song China, this musical genre was used at royal banquets until the reign of King Sejong. In this case, *ilmu* (the ritualistic line dance) was accompanied and *deungga* for such occasions consisted of *aak* instruments. After King Sejong created new musical pieces (*hyangak*), however, *aak* was replaced with *hyangak* or *Dangak* (Chinese music) and the ensemble playing *aak* disappeared. Due to such change, court dance called *jeongjae* was performed instead of *ilmu* and instruments for *deungga* were replaced with *Dangak* and *hyangak* instruments.

Deungga for festive occasions was in charge of playing for court dance at banquets and thus it was not arranged at non-festive events. This makes it distinctive from *jeonjeong heonga*, which was used for both festive occasions and *joui* 朝儀, in which the king greeted government officials. When banquets were held, *jeonjeong heonga* and *deungga* played alternately. The former did when the king departed from or returned to the palace and received subjects' greetings while the latter for court dance. In short, whether to play for dance is a distinctive feature between the two. The arrangement of banquet orchestras is described below (Figure 1).

1. *eojwa*
2. boy dancers
3. *deungga*
4. *jeonjeong heonga*
5. Space for *jeonhu gochwi*

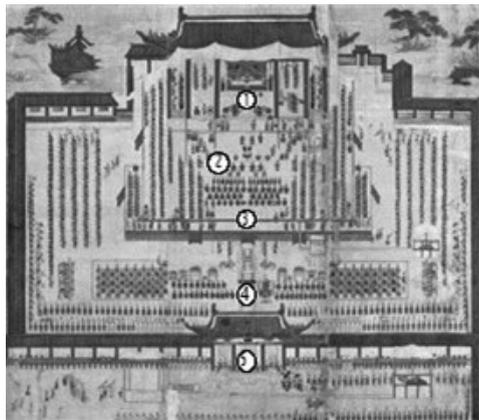


Figure 1. The Arrangement of Royal Seat, Boy Dancers, and Ensembles at the Congratulatory Ceremony and Banquet of 1829

Royal Musical Institutions and Performers of Music, Songs, and Dance

Royal musical institution began to exist in the Unified Silla period (676-935). In Joseon, there were several institutions devoted to court music and performances with their names changed over time. Among them, Jangakwon (Bureau of Court Music 掌樂院) was the oldest, serving for 427 years until being changed into Gyobangsa 教坊司 in 1897.

Music and dance at court rituals were performed by Jangakwon performers such as *akgong* 樂工, *aksaeng* 樂生, *gwanhyeon maengin* (blind musicians 管絃盲人), *yeoak* (female performers 女樂), and *mudong* (boy dancers 舞童). Main musicians were *akgong* and *aksaeng* at *naeyeon* (banquets for female guests), they were often replaced by blind musicians and female performers. At *oeyeon* (banquets for male guests), boy dancers performed while female performers sang and danced at *naeyeon*. Blind musicians played for songs and dance of female performers at banquets held for the queen and princesses. At large-scale celebratory banquets such as *jinyeon* and *jinchon*, however, musicians from Jangakwon performed instead of blind musicians. In this case, a screen was placed to keep the musicians from peeping inside (Figure 4-2). This reflects the Confucian norm that prohibits male and female adults from sitting together at official occasions. It is the same reason that boy dancers, not female performers, performed at banquets for male guests.

There was difference between court musicians in their social classes. *Akgong* were selected from the lowest *cheonin* class to play *hyangak* (indigenous music) and *Dangak* (Chinese music) at banquets. Meanwhile, *aksaeng* were of the commoner or the *yangin* class and played *aak* (Confucian ritual music) during sacrificial rites. Female performers were called *yeogi*, *yeogongin* 女工人, *yeoryeong* 女伶, and *ginyeo* 妓女, and music played by them was called *yeoak* 女樂. (Kim 2001). In early Joseon, female performers with excellent skills in local provinces were scouted and brought to Jangakwon and they performed at court occasions. In usual time, however, they served as maids at *naeuwon* (Office of the Royal Physicians 內醫院) or as *chimseonbi* (sewing maids 針線婢) at the Office of Royal Attire (*sanguiwon*). In early Joseon, female performers from local provinces were also called up for *naeyeon* (banquet for female guests) and they were called *seonsanggi* 選上妓, most of whom were government courtesans of Pyeongan and Gyeongsang provinces. This system facilitated the distribution of royal ritual

performances to local provinces (Song 1995, 133-62). As a result, the same dance could be shared at the court and local governments, though the scales and forms of events were different each other.

Change in the Playing Practice of Joseon Court Music

Joseon court music lost its stable foundation during the two full-scale foreign invasions, the Japanese invasion of 1592-1597 and the Manchu War of 1636. Into the later period, it underwent considerable changes: decrease in the number of musical pieces, change in the instrumentation of ensembles, change in melodies and rhythm of pieces, and songs changed into instrumental music. The reduced number of pieces accelerated decline in court music, with no more pieces created in later years.

With these changes, the playing practice of royal ensembles also changed. Until early Joseon, the court music was primarily performed by the combination of wind and string instruments, not solely by wind ones, though the size and orchestration of each ensemble different. With the exception of some by the *gochwui* ensemble, *akjang* (music with text dedicated to ritual 樂章) was mostly performed.

During the late Joseon, however, court music was played by wind instruments except when performed by *deungga* for court dance. For example, *jeonjeong heonga* and *jeonjeong gochwui* consisted only of wind instruments, with string ones including *geomungo*, *gayageum*, and *wolgeum* excluded. The exemplar of such practice can be

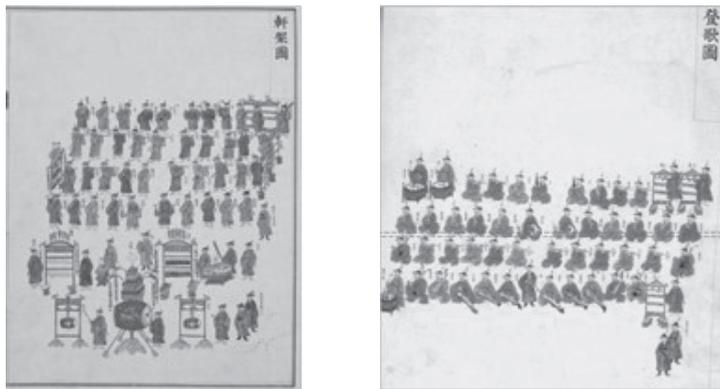


Figure 2. *Jeonjeong heonga* (left) and *Deungga* (right) in the “Illustration of the Royal Banquet for Queen Hyegyeyong” in 1809

found in the instrumentation of *jeonjeong heonga*, whose playing practice has been inherited by the National Gugak Center as orchestral music. “Yeomillakman,” “Yeomillakryeong,” “Boheoja,” and “Nagyangchun” were played by wind instruments following the late Joseon tradition (Lim 2014, 124-26).

Jeonjeong gochwui also consisted only of wind instruments in later period and its size was reduced as well. But aak instruments used by *jeonjeong heonga* were not used in *jeonjeong gochwui* throughout the Joseon period. Therefore, the use of aak instruments made *jeonjeong heongga* distinctive from *jeonjeong gochwui*. The playing practice of *jeonjeong gochwui* does not survive today.

In the case of *deungga* of the late Joseon, the instrumentation was scaled down compared to the early period. But the ensemble consisted of wind, string, and percussion instruments including *Dangak* and *hyangak* instruments while *aak* instruments were excluded as in the early period. As string instruments were used by *deungga*, music for court dance was played by an ensemble of wind and string instruments throughout the dynasty. The playing practice of *deungga* has been handed down by the National Gugak Center, where “Yeomillak” and “Pyeongjo hoesang” are played by an ensemble of wind and string instruments. For better understanding, changes of the instrumentation of the three ensembles throughout the Joseon period are summarized below (table 1).

Table 1. Changes in Instrumentations of *Jeonjeong heonga*, *Jeonjeong gochwui*, and *Deungga* in Joseon

Ensemble/period	From Sejo to Seonggong and before Sukjong	From Sukjong to the Korean Empire
<i>Jeonjeong heonga</i>	aak, <i>Dangkak</i> , and <i>hyangak</i> instruments	aak, <i>Dangkak</i> , and <i>hyangak</i> instruments
<i>Jeonjeong gochwui</i>	<i>Dangkak</i> and <i>hyangak</i> instruments	<i>Dangkak</i> and <i>hyangak</i> instruments
<i>Deungga</i>	<i>Dangkak</i> and <i>hyangak</i> instruments	<i>Dangkak</i> and <i>hyangak</i> instruments

* note: ■ wind and string instruments combined / □ only wind instruments

Music for court dance continued to be played by wind and string instruments throughout the Joseon period but the number of pieces was reduced considerably in the later period. Also, the practice of using *Dangkak* instruments at *Dangkak* dance and *hyangak* instruments at *hyangak* dance disappeared later. In the early period, each dance was paired with specific piece. For example, “Jeongeup (Sujecheon)” was played for *mugo*, “Dongdong” for *abak*, and “Boheoja” for *jangsaeng boyeon jimui*, a practice that no longer existed

in the later period.

Transmission of Court Music in Modern Times

The court music of the Joseon dynasty has maintained its tradition for more than five hundred years though considerable changes arose between the early and late periods. While the dynasty elevated its status by changing its name to the Korean Empire, the dynastic tradition did not disappear. Although the western-style military system was introduced in the new empire, the military band was not a major successor of court music.

During the Korean Empire, early-Joseon court music was preserved well but with the invasion of the imperialist Japan, it fell into a great crisis. Due to the Japanese annexation of Korea, all state rituals except those at Jongmyo (Royal Ancestral Shrine) and Munmyo (Confucian Shrine) were abolished, which threatened the existence of court music. Though the Office of the Yi Dynasty (Yiwangjik) was charged with preserving the court music, its functional aspect—that is, the function of playing at rituals—became lost. Consequently, its original performing practice could not be preserved. Court music was handed down by Yiwangjik and some private groups but its repertoires and playing practice became greatly different from those of the early Joseon. Furthermore, it began to be appreciated by ordinary people as well, and consequently, folk music was blended in the court music.

Now, Joseon court music has been handed down by the National Gugak Center. The institution inherits the repertoires and performing practice from Jangakwon and its successor Yiwangjik but also the repertoires of private musical institutions such as Joseon jeongak jeonseupso, (a private music school), Hyeomnyulsa (the country's first indoor theater), and the Association of Female Performers. Furthermore, it preserves the playing practices of the orchestras at both the court and local offices. Therefore, the court music performed at the National Gugak Center is a blend of the original and its variations.

Understating of Joseon Court Music in Cultural Historical Perspective

Sacrificial Rites and Music: Displaying the Royal Legitimacy and Authority

Sacrificial rites performed at the Joseon court mostly belong to *gilnye of oryeui*, and carried great significance. They signify that as everything in the world originated from heaven and people from their ancestors, one should perform sacrifice to heaven and earth or their ancestors not to forget their origins. Therefore, music for sacrificial rites was considered the most important in court music. The reason for using music at such rites is that people believed they can communicate with spirits of heaven and earth through music. But not all sacrificial rites were accompanied by music. Only at the following ones, music was played: All of *daesa* (large-scale rites) including those for heaven, the soil and grain deities, royal ancestors, respectively; some of *jungsa* (medium-scale rites) such as *seonmong* (rite for agriculture deities), *seonjam* (rite for the sericulture deity), and *munmyoje* (the rite for Confucius). Meanwhile, *sosa* (smallest rites) used no music.

Also, different music pieces were used depending on the type of sacrificial rites. Since the Chinese Confucian ritual music, *daeseong aak*, was imported in the early 12th century, *aak* was played at scarified rituals until King Sejong's reign. But in the later period of King Sejong, a great number of *hyangak* (indigenous music) was created and as a result *aak* became less used in sacrificial

1. *deungga* ensemble
2. *yugilmu*
(thirty-six dancers in six lines)
3. *heongga* ensemble

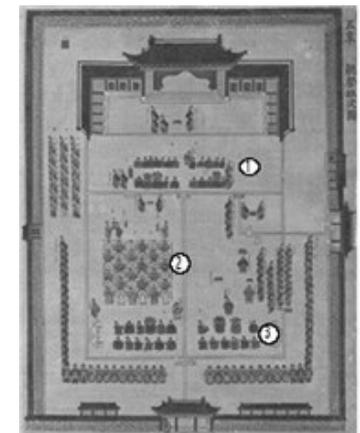


Figure 3. Illustration of Rite for the Royal Ancestors (19th century)

rites. As such, different sacrificial music pieces were played depending on the ritual type and the period. A best example is replacing the Chinese music *aak* with *hyangak* pieces, “Botaebyeong” and “Jeongdaeop,” at the rite for the royal ancestors during King Sejo’s reign, a tradition that lasts to the present.

In Joseon, the rites at Jongmyo and Sajik respectively were considered the most significant of royal sacrificial rites as they symbolized the foundation of state. The former was held at the place where the spirit tablets of former kings and queens were enshrined and it symbolizes the legitimacy of state from a Confucian perspective. The latter is the rite for the soil and grain deities. The two were principal state rites attended by the king, who presided over them as the chief of state, a practice symbolic of the royal legitimacy and authority.

Sacrificial rites were accompanied by music, dance, and *akjang* (ritual songs) just as royal banquets were. But the types of performances were different. For example, at sacrificial rites, dance called *ilmu* (line dance) was performed. At the rite for the royal ancestors, *aak* was used before the 10th year of King Sejo (1464), when it was replaced with *hyangak*, namely, “Botaebyeong” and “Jeongdaeop.” But the rite for the soil and grain deities was accompanied by *aak* throughout the Joseon period.

Ilmu literally means “line dance” and had two different types: one is called *mummu* which honors literary excellence and other is *mumu* for praising military achievement. As Joseon was a vassal state, the class of sacrificial rituals was lower than that of China. The name of ensembles for sacrificial music was given according to the vassal state class and dance (*ilmu*). Joseon should use *yugilmu* (thirty-six dancers in six lines 六佾舞). When Joseon proclaimed itself as an emperor’s state by changing its name to the Korean Empire, *parilmu* (sixty-four dancers in eight lines 八佾舞) began to be performed. Meanwhile, *heonga*, the music for a vassal state, was replaced with *gungga* 宮架, music for an empire. The terms for soil and grain deities were also changed from *guksa* and *gukjik* to *taesa* and *taejik*, respectively.

Currently, among sacrificial rituals of Joseon court, only the rite for the royal ancestors and the rite for Confucius have survived now and only recently the rite for soil and grain deities was resumed. The rite for the royal ancestors and its music were designated as the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO on May 18th, 2001 and in 2008, they were included in Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. With these honors, they became representative cultural heritage of the 500-year old Joseon dynasty.

Hierarchical Order and Ceremonial Music for Good Relations

Joui and yeohyang

Joui and *yeohyang* belonged to *garye* (festive rites 嘉禮) and *billye* (rites for envoys 賓禮), respectively. *Joui* refers to a non-festive royal ritual, in which the king greeted government officials while *yeonhyang* does to court banquets. Both types were collectively called *yeollhye*, and music used for such rituals called *yeollhyeak*. This musical genre was divided into *johoeak*, *hoeryek*, *yeonhyangak*, and *gochwiak* depending on their purposes and types. Each of them does not refer to a particular musical genre since pieces were not reserved for a specific ritual. For example, “Yeomillak” was played at the morning assembly at the court, royal banquets or the royal processions. As such, the same music was used at different types of rituals with no particular distinction.

Joui was divided into *harye*, *joha*, and *jocham* while *yeonhyang* was classified into *hoeryeyeon*, *yangnoyeon*, *jinyeon*, and *sagaegyeon* depending on the motive of the banquet. *Yeonhyang* was not only a place for enjoyment but was held with clear motives and purposes. *Hoeryeyeon*, for example, was a ritual symbolic of achieving unity between king and subject. *Yangnoyeon* was held to inspire filial devotion by inviting and expressing respect to the elderly. *Jinyeon* was to solidify the royal foundation by bringing together officials, royal relatives, and meritorious subjects, thereby fostering close relationship like a member of the family. *Sagaengnyeon* was intended to promote friendship with neighboring countries by treating their envoys.

Yeonhyang was held regularly but sometimes temporarily when there was an event to celebrate on a national scale. This kind was called *jinyeon*, *jinchan*, or *jinjak*. To prepare for such occasion, an ad hoc agency was established and *uigwe*, the illustrated record of the event, was produced.¹

While dance was not performed at *joui* but was at *yeonhyang* as an important element of the festive occasion. The figures below are the illustrations of *haryeo* and *yeonhyang* held respectively, in the 14th year of King Heonjong (1848). At *joui* only one ensemble (*jeonjeong heonga*) was placed (Figure 4-1), and at *yeonhyang* an ensemble for dance (*deungga*) was added on the upper part

1. Folding screens were also produced along with *uigwe*.

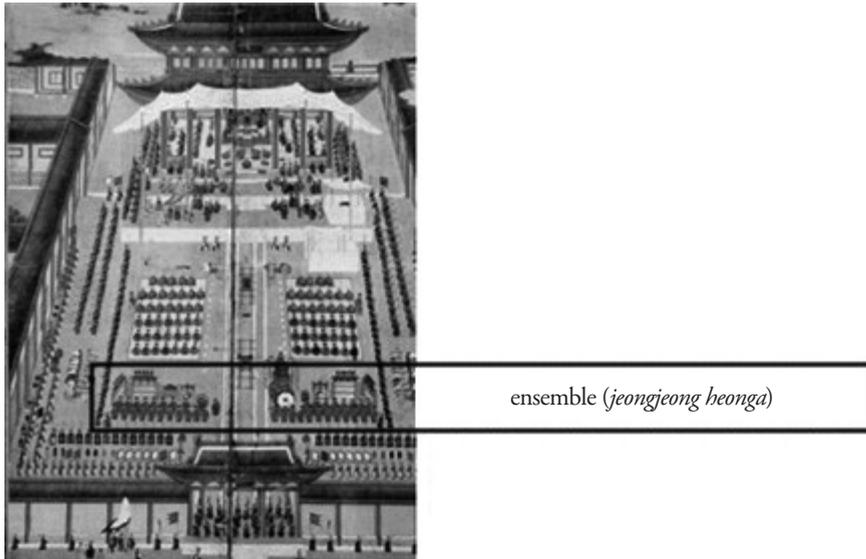


Figure 4-1. Celebratory Ritual of 1848 Ensemble (*jeonjeong heonga*)

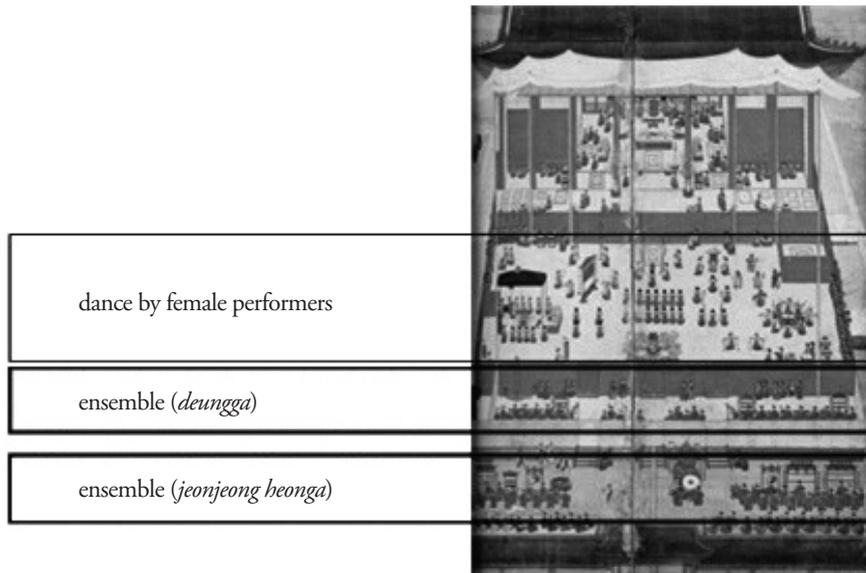


Figure 4-2. Royal Banquet of 1848

(Figure 4-2).

In court rituals man and woman were prohibited from sitting together by the Confucian norm. Therefore, royal banquets had two types. One was host by

the king (*oeyeon*) and the other by the queen (*naeyeon*). *Hoeryeyeon*, which was organized by the king was attended by the crown prince, royal relatives, royal in-laws, and all the civil and military officials. When the occasion was held by the queen, those invited were the crown prince's consort and other royal ladies as well as those from private noble families. As for *yangnoyeon*, when the king organized it, only male elders were invited, so were female elders solely when the queen did.

Yeonhyang at the court was held according to specific procedures. For example, the king entered the venue of the occasion, ascended the sitting place, and raised a cup of wine, all of which were performed in the established procedures. Meanwhile, dance was performed every time when the king raised a cup of wine. Such details were recorded in *uigwe*. The illustration below (Figure 5) describes the banquet of 1848, which appears that some dances were performed during the feast. Without reference to *uigwe*, it can be mistakenly assumed that they performed together all at once. But in fact, dance was performed once at every stage and this illustration just depicts all the dances performed in a proper sequence on a single paper.

Yeollyeak underwent continuous change in the transmission process throughout the Joseon period. This musical genre was used differently according to the class of occasions. For example, different ensembles were accompanied, or if the same ensemble was used, they were differentiated by the event's scale. Concerning songs, *aak* and *sogak* were chosen selectively, and if the same song

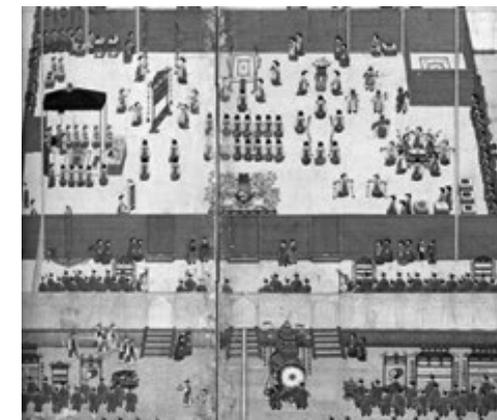


Figure 5. The Illustration of the 1848 Banquet ("Musin jinchandobyeong")

was used, it was differentiated by its variations on the central tone pitches.

Aak, which was introduced during the reign of King Yejong of Goryeo, was considered the most elegant until the time of King Sejong. Thus, the use of it at a certain ritual signified that the occasion was of higher class than those using *sogak*. After King Sejong established the Korean-styled *aak* by revamping Goryeo *aak*, it became the mainstay of the court music for a while (Provine 1974, 1988). Later, Sejong also created new *hyangak* pieces with an aim to ultimately replace *aak* in royal rituals.² Though his intention was not realized during his reign, change began to arise in the reign of King Sejo. Sejong stopped the practice of using *aak* in *hoeryecheon* and instead used newly created songs such as “Jeondaeop” and “Botaepyeong,” but they could not be used at sacrificial rites. However, Sejo succeeded in replacing *aak* with the new songs that Sejong made for *hoeryecheon* at sacrificial rites (Lim 2013, 115-37). Such innovative move during his reign helped reinforce the identity of Joseon court music.

***Yangnoyeon*, sharing joy with the people**

In Joseon, court banquets were held for specific purposes, and guests were selected strictly by them. Thus, it was almost impossible for low-level officials or commoners to attend such events. Only *yangnoyeon* (banquet for the elderly) was open to them.

The banquet was an important ritual as a way of realizing the king’s virtuous rule based on Confucian principle by bringing together the people regardless of the social class to share joy together. Such banquet was first held in the 14th year of King Sejong (1432), and it became a regular occasion after the State Code (*Gyeongguk daejeon*) stipulated that people aged 80 and older be invited to the court or local offices every September.

This event was intended to pay respect to the elderly and thus even people of the lowest status were invited. As it was considered a significant event, music reserved for high-class occasions was used.

Like any other royal banquets, *yangnoyeon* was divided into two, *oeyeon* and *naeyeon*. The former was organized by the king and the latter was by the

1. royal seat
2. officials of third or below rank
3. ensemble
4. noblemen (*yangban*) with no official rank and commoners

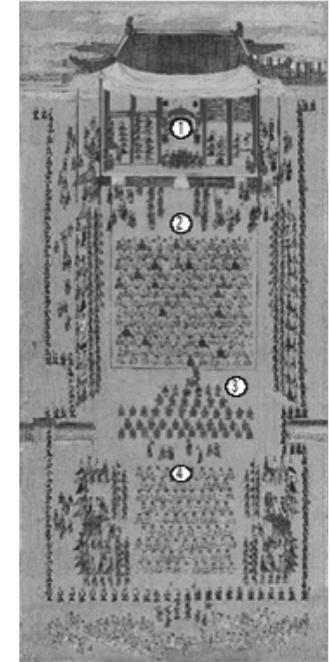


Figure 6. Illustration of the Banquet for the Elderly at Nangnamheon

queen for the female elderly, which was called *junggung yangnoyeon* and was held on a smaller scale than that by the king. Banquets at local offices were held more frugally than at the court. Despite these differences, guests were invited regardless of gender and social status to banquets both at the court and local offices.

Yangnoyeon was usually a regular event, but sometimes it was held temporarily when there was a huge celebratory occasion at the court. A case in point is the celebration of the 60th birthday of Queen Hyegyeng, mother of King Jeongjo in 1795. The banquet was held at Hwaseong (present-day Suwon) where the local elderly were invited to share this joyful event with the people. It was a way of practicing a ruler’s governing philosophy, *yeomin dongnak* (enjoy with the people).

After the Hwaseong event, Queen Hyegyeng’s birthday was also celebrated at Yeonhui House, the queen’s quarters on her birthday. After the celebratory banquet, King Jeongjo distributed food to subjects and also order it to be offered to others so that people from high-ranking officials down to military soldiers could enjoy the joyous event.

2. New *hyangak* pieces made by King Sejong were found in *Sejongsillok akbo* (*Musical Notations of the Annals of King Sejong*), some of which survive even today.

Yangnoyeon at the Nangnam Office (Nangnamheon) in Hwaseong was smaller in scale than at the court. Ritual ceremonies were simplified, and dance performance was omitted. But music was played. The ensemble was arranged on a small scale but consisted of musicians from Jangakwon. Therefore, the elderly guests were allowed to enjoy court music that otherwise they would have never done in their lifetime. *Hyangak* pieces such as “Yeomillangman” and “Yeomillangnyeong” and *Dangak* pieces such as “Nagyangchun” were played and *aak* including “Nongmyeong,” “Namugaeo,” and “Namsanyudae” were also played. It is rare that *aak* was used at banquets in the late Joseon. It can be interpreted that Jeonjo’s choice of *aak* reflects his intention to emulate King Sejong, who held such event for the first time with *aak* accompanied.

Saak, Royally Bestowed Music

Court music was generally performed at the court except for sacrificial rites. Therefore, it was extremely difficult for the common people to enjoy it. But, *saak* 賜樂, which officially played outside the court gave them access to court music. The court often bestowed bequests on royal in-laws, relatives, and subjects in praise of their service, which was called *sayeon* 賜宴. At such occasions court musicians were sent and music was performed by them, which is called *saak*.

Saak was divided into four degrees depending on the number of musicians and female performers. For example, the first-degree one consists of 10 musicians and 20 female performers; the second-degree one, 10 musicians and 15 female performers; and the third-degree one, 7 musicians and 10 female performers.

The attires of musicians and female performers at *sayeon* was not the same as those at royal banquets such as *jinyeon* and *jinchan*. As the hierarchical difference existed between banquets held at the court and those bestowed on subjects, the latter was accompanied with a smaller ensemble and held in a simply way. Meanwhile, at banquets held outside the court in celebration of officials who entered Giroso (agency for the elderly officials), performers wore the same as those for *jinyeon* (royal banquets).

Daesarye, Symbol of Military Leadership and its Music

In the Joseon period, there was a ritual called *daesarye* 大射禮, which began with

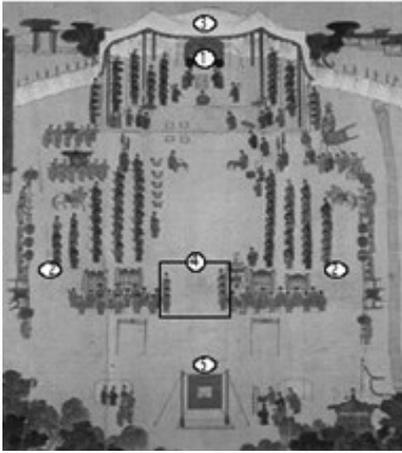
the king’s shooting arrows and subsequently all the civil and military officials joining an archery contest to receive reward or punishments based on their performance. In East Asia archery was one of the six arts men should practice. Therefore, this event was of great significance as it provided an opportunity to cultivate virtue through mental and physical discipline and at the same time to prepare for state emergency. It belonged to *gullye* 軍禮, the military rite of *orye* (the five state rites).

Gullye of Joseon was completed during the reign of King Sejong based on military rites of Goryeo and China. *Sarye*, the rite for archery, had two types. One is called *daesarye* 大射禮, which was attended by the king and once called *sausadanui* 射于射壇儀 until King Seongjong’s reign. The other was *hyangsarye* 鄉射禮 organized by local noblemen or magistrates.

Daesarye is a ritual symbolic of the military leadership of the king and also the event to confirm the propriety between king and subject through an archery contest. This occasion occurred on a regular basis in the early period but into the late period, it was held temporarily during the period from King Jungjong to Yeongjo. For example, the one held in the 19th year of King Yeongjo (1743) was aimed at strengthening royal power. The king delivered a message that the event was not only for the king and some officials but all the people living a peaceful life under a stable royal rule (National Folk Museum 2009, 7). *Daesarye uigwe*, a full record of the ritual and *Daesaryeodo*, the illustration of the ritual, provide details of the event. It began with the king’s performing sacrifice at the Confucian shrine followed by shooting arrows on the archery ground. State examinations were often held as part of the occasion. For example, at *daesarye* in the 19th year of King Yeongjo (1743), both civil and military examinations were held along with sacrificial rites at Seonggyungwan (the Royal Academy).

Daesarye was a high-class royal ritual, and thus music was used according to the ritual’s class. It was confirmed by the fact that *jeonjeong heonga* was placed at *hongmun* (“red gate”) which stood at the east and west of the court. There was a large space in the center of the ensemble to prevent musicians from being shot by arrows (Figure 7).

The *jeonjeong heonga* (Figure 7) was placed at important rites belonging to *garye* (festive rites) and among *gullye* (military rites), only for *daesarye*. During the reign of King Sejong, when archery ritual was first established, *aak* was



1. king's seat
2. *jeonjeong heonga*
3. space for *gochwi* ensemble
4. an arrow's way
5. target

Figure 7. Illustration of *Daesaryeo* (“Daesaryeodo” 1743), Korea University Museum

played at *daesarye*,³ but from the time of King Seongjong, it was replaced with *hyangak* (the elegant indigenous music).

During the important stages like when an archer shot an arrow, music was played by *jeonjeong heonga*. Meanwhile, the *gochwi* ensemble was played when the king left and returned to the royal tent (*akcha* 幄次), which was *jeonhu gochwi* placed at the back of the courtyard, not for a royal procession.

When *daesaryeo* was held, music with lyrics were played. When the king shot an arrow (*osa*) and subjects did (*sisa*), “Yeokseong” is presumed to have been played.⁴ It is the last of the 11-piece “Botaebyeong,” which was played at sacrifice at the Royal Ancestral Shrine. At *daesarye* the piece played with different lyrics. The following illustrates well the meaning and symbol of the ritual:

Lyrics for the Royal Shooting

The king has arrived at *bangung* (the Royal Academy)
 And performed sacrificial rites there, which is proper propriety.
 A large target has been placed and the king draws his bow to shoot.

3. Since the revamping of *aak* during the reign of King Sejong, this musical genre was performed at important rituals such as *gillye*, *garye*, and *gullye*.

4. *Akhakgwebeom*, Chapter 2 on *baryeo* and *yeonhyangak* states that while in shooting arrows at *daesare*, “Yeokseong” should be played. According to Chapter 105 of *Jeungbo munbeonbigyo* (*Encyclopedia of Joseon*), “Yeomillangnyeong” and “Yeokseong” should be played.

Four arrows hit the target and all the people applaud it.

思樂泮宮 駕言戾止
 以享以祀 禮儀卒備
 既抗大侯 弓矢斯張
 四鏃既樹 萬民所望

Lyrics for Subjects' Shooting

As the sound of music resonates at *bangung*
 All the officials gather together.

A banquet has been held and they give out benevolence by shooting arrows.
 By reporting their hitting the target, they all pay reverence to the king.

於樂泮宮 於論鼓鍾
 凡百卿士 曰皆景從
 以燕以射 矢其德音
 獻爾發功 罔有不欽

The first lyrics describe that the king visited Seonggyungwan (the Royal Academy), performed sacrifice at the Confucian shrine, and shot arrows, which is proper propriety and that the people wish for the king to hit the target. King Yeongjo appeared on the archery ground and prepared himself for shooting while these lyrics were repeated three times. When it was played for the fourth time, he pulled a string and shot. Every time he shot four arrows, this song was played. In the case of subjects' shooting, different lyrics were played. They sing that a subject's shooting is an act of delivering benevolence and venerating the ruler. At every royal ritual, different lyrics were sung depending on the class of an occasion. As described in these songs, the event of shooting an arrow was a time of delivering benevolence and seeking harmony in the country (Shin 2016, 229-35).

The Policy of Sadae gyorin and its Music

The Joseon court's diplomatic policy was summarized in the term *sadae gyorin*, which means serving China and keeping good relations with neighbors such as the Jurchen and Japan. Rituals related to neighboring countries belonged to *billye* (rites for envoys 賓禮) and some of them to *garye* (festive rites 嘉禮). The related rules and cases were documented in various works as follows: *Sejong*

sillok (*Annals of King Sejong*); *Orye* (*The Five Rituals*); *Gukjo oryewi* (*The Five Rites of State*); *Gyeongguk daejeon* (*The National Code*); *Chungwan tonggo* (*A Compendium on the Activities of the Ministry of Rites*); *Haedong jegukgi* (*Record of Japan and the Ryukyu Islands*); *Jeungjeong gyorinji* (*Compendium of Diplomatic Relations*); *Tongmungwanji* (*Compendium of the Interpreter's Bureau*); and some sources of *uigwe* and *deungnok* (daily administrative record). According to these records, in receiving and holding banquets for foreign envoys, Chinese envoys were treated differently from chiefs of Japanese tribes and Tsushima Island, and the Jurchen with different ritual procedures.

Such discrimination was conducted in various ways from the number and scale of banquets and the type and instrumentation of ensembles to the number of female performers and even their attire.

Akhakwebeom (*Guide to the Study of Music*) contains records about banquets for foreign envoys, which show stark distinction in the formalities of receiving guests. At banquets held at the court in early Joseon, the size of ensembles and the number of female performers were different between Chinese and Japanese envoys. In receiving Japanese envoys the ensemble was reduced in scale and female performers were clad in everyday clothes. For Chinese envoys, however, banquets were held lavishly at the courtyard, Mohwagwan, and Taepyeongwan, where grand-scale performances were held featuring scores of female performers and a large ensemble consisting of musicians from Jangakwon. According to the state's policy of *sadae gyorin*, there existed a stark distinction between Chinese and Japanese envoys in treating them and such distinction became more obvious after the Imjin War (1592-1598). After the war, Japanese envoys were prohibited from entering the capital and the formalities of treating them became much more simplified than in the early period.

Meanwhile, Chinese envoys received lavish treatment in Pyeongan and Hwanghae provinces throughout the Joseon period. When they stayed in the capital, grand-scale banquets were held at Mohwagwan and within the courtyard. After the Imjin War, Japanese envoys were allowed to stay only in Waegwan (Japanese quarters) in Dongnae of Gyeongsang province. Therefore, there was no welcoming occasions at the court as in the early period. While Chinese envoys enjoyed court dance and music, Japanese envoys were treated with folk music played by *samhyeon yugak*, an ensemble consisting of musicians called *chwigosu* or *seaksu* and with the accompaniment of songs and dance of

local female performers (Lim 2011, 278-97).

Soundless Music for National Funerals

National Funerals belong to *hyungnye* (funeral rites 凶禮) of *oryewi*. They are divided into two: funerals of the Chinese imperial court and those of the Joseon royal court. Music was used limitedly at funerals and performed in a different manner from other rituals.

When the king died, music was prohibited for the three-year mourning period, except at *daesa*, the large scale rite, such as *jongmyoje* (the royal ancestral rite) and *sajikje* (the rite for the soil and grain deities). But in some cases, the funeral was accompanied with *jeonbu gochwui* (ensemble in the front) and *hubu gochwui* (ensemble in the back).

Figure 8 below shows *jeonbu gochwui* and *hubu gochwui* in the "Illustration of the Funeral Procession of Queen Jangnyeol (1624-1688)." It may appear that music was playing by the ensembles, but in fact they were not played but arranged. After the mourning period was completed, the spirit tablet was moved from *honjeon*, the place in which the spirit tablet is placed till the end of mourning session after burial, to Jongmyo, the royal ancestral shrine. During this travel, music was played by *jeonbu gochwui* and *hubu gochwui*.

As shown in Figure 8, *jeonbu gochwui* was arranged in front of the procession and *hubu gochwui* in the back. There were 10 musicians holding their instruments such as Chinese *bipa*, *janggu*, *daegum*, and *buk*, but they did not play. The practice in which instruments were not played but arranged is called *jiniibujak* 陳而不作. This way of playing was also used at the royal

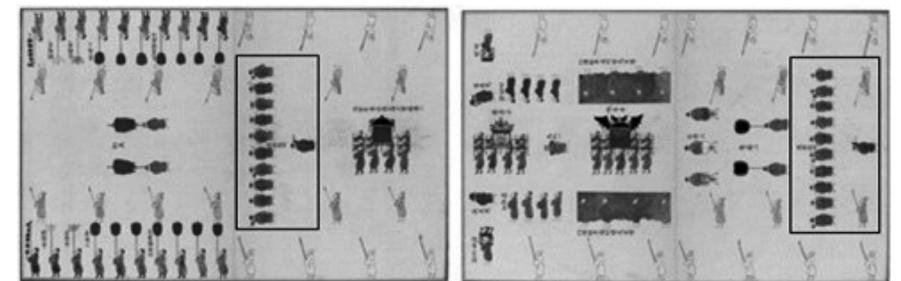


Figure 8. *Jeonbu gochwui* (left) and *Hubu gochwui* (right) in the "Illustration of the Funeral Procession of Queen Jangnyeol"

wedding, when receiving the consort of the king or the crown prince according to the Confucian propriety. As seen above, the use of music for royal rituals was prescribed by law so that it could be performed in accordance with the Confucian norm.

The Symbol of the King in Music of Joseon

Court music was primarily for *oryeui* and thus it was different from music made for appreciation. The *oryeui* rituals have distinctive classes, and such distinction should be applied to music. And this was actually done in complex and various ways, which include, for example, the use of different ensembles or repertoires. Therefore, displaying the royal authority was done in different manners (Lim 2019, 231-58).

The symbol of the king was not revealed explicitly in court music itself. But there was clear distinction in ritual procedures between events attended by king and those not. Even in rituals attended by the king, the royal presence became distinctive by the different arrangement of ensembles and their repertoires. Therefore, comprehensive analysis of the accompanied ensembles and their repertoires is required to understand how royal symbols were exhibited musically. In this sense, musical pieces by *jeonjeong heonga* are useful sources as this ensemble was placed only for high-class rites.

The royal symbol in ritual music was displayed differently over time. In the early period, it can be found in pieces made to praise the king as the founder of a new state. During the reign of King Sejong, a piece titled “Yunganjiak” represented the royal authority and after the 29th year of King Sejong, so did “Yeomillakman” 與民樂慢, “Yeomillakryeong” 與民樂伶, and “Hwangjonggung” 黃鍾宮. The former two songs were not only for the king but when played at other rites, their variations with the central tone modified were played.

When the king departed from the palace for an official outing, the royal procession was accompanied by *nobu* 鹵簿 and the *gochwi* ensemble. *Nobu* refers to a set of regalia for the royal procession and had three different types depending on the king's destination: *daega nobu*, *beopga nobu*, and *soga nobu*. According to *Akhakgwebeom (Guide to the Study of Music)*, the former two were accompanied by *jeonbu gochwi* at the front of the procession and *hubu gochwi* in the back. In the case of *soga nobu* (smallest procession), it was accompanied only

with *jeonbu gochwi*. *hubu gochwi* was an ensemble that strongly symbolized the royal authority. Such ritual protocol made in the 15th century was observed until the later period.

Therefore, when the royal carriage moved out of the palace, only *jeonbu gochwi* was arranged.⁵

In short, *jeonbu gochwi* (ensemble in the front) and *hubu gochwi* (ensemble in the back) accompanied with *daga nobu* and *beopga nobu* were arranged at high-class rituals like ones attended by the king, and their music correspondingly represent the royal authority as opposed to banquet music.

The Symbol of the Emperor and Wonguak

Wonguje 圓丘祭 refers to sacrificial rites to heaven performed in principle only in an emperor's country. As it was to pray for good harvest to heaven, performing this rite was an important political gesture to send a message that the emperor cares for his people. Therefore, assuming the responsibility for this rite means the ruler possesses most sacred political right in the world.

In Joseon, which was a vassal country, *wonguje* was held at the beginning of the dynasty but was abolished in the mid-period of King Sejong because it was considered to improper for a vassal country to practice a sacrificial rite to heaven. Then it was resumed by King Sejo but only continued during his reign. It was only in 1897 when this rite was performed once again as Joseon changed its state name to the Korean Empire.

Gojong (r. 1863-1907) was installed as emperor of the Korean Empire. Before the coronation ceremony, the new emperor performed a sacrificial ritual at *wongudan* (the Heavenly Altar 圓丘壇) because it was an symbolically important event in ascending to the throne. In other words, performing this rite meant the ruler inherits heavenly virtue.

Gojong performed the rite for heaven as a means of showing the authority of an emperor's country and realizing his intension to lead his country as an independent political entity. In short, this was a diplomatically symbolic gesture of ending the subordinate relationship with the Qing and at the same time a political gesture of creating imperial power.

5. Chapter 105, *Jeungbomunheonbiga (Encyclopedia of Joseon)*.

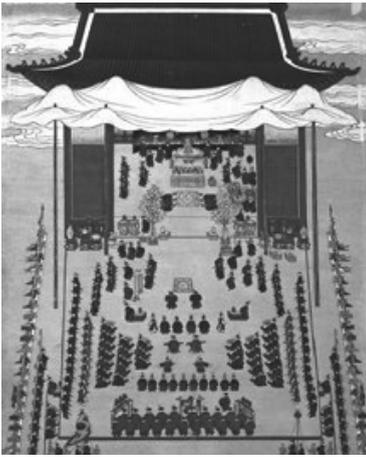


Figure 9. Coronation Ceremony of Gojong (1897)

To prepare for the rite held in the 10th month of 1897, revised law on state sacrificial rites was proposed in 1895 and approved by Gojong in 1896 with an order of making written prayers and musical pieces for the event. In the following year, he ordered to have utensils and musical instruments ready for it. As shown above, preparations for the rite were planned by Gojong before it was actually held.

Wonguje was abolished in 1910 when Korea was colonized by the imperialist Japan, but this ritual held during the Korean Empire was different

from that of the early Joseon in terms of its standing and characteristics. To show the elevated status of the country, *heonga* was replaced with *gunga* 宮架, an ensemble for an emperor.⁶ Dance was also changed from *yugilmu* to *parilmu* to symbolize an emperor's country. Since then, *parilmu* was performed at all the large-scale sacrificial rites such as *jongmyoje* (rite for the royal ancestors) and *sajikje* (rite for the soil and grain deities)—a practice that has continued to this day. Sacrificial rites have been observed throughout the Joseon dynasty and to this day, but it was only during the Korean Empire that *parilmu* began to be performed at this rite (Lim 2010, 67-105).

Documents on Court Music

In the study of Joseon court music, literature and paintings of various sources are useful materials. Each source, however, usually deals with only a specific part of

the subject as a single work is impossible to cover all the information on it. For example, *Akhakgwebeom* (*Guide to the Study of Music*) contains comprehensive information on royal music and dance, but few on musical notations, which is crucial in studying music itself and exploring it in a more organized way. Musical notations also give details of the melodies, forms of pieces, and even the process of change in music, but they cannot tell the following: what purpose a musical piece were created, who composed it, and by whom it was enjoyed. Therefore, comparative analysis of various materials is essential to the study of Joseon court music.

There are various ways of exploring the subject. No matter what they choose, researchers have to rely solely on historical sources. In this respect, access to information on research subjects and comprehensive understanding of it is necessary. This chapter will look into how the Joseon court music was documented and how such records can be utilized in this field.

Literature Produced at the Joseon Court

Court records contain the most objective information on court music. For example, related information can be found in Joseon *wangjo sillok* (*Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*). This information is valuable in itself, but it can tell more details after being compared with other historical works. *Goryeosa* (*History of Goryeo*) also covers court music, mostly found in Yegi (chapter on propriety 禮志) and Akji (chapter on music 樂志). As the early-Joseon court music was based on that from Goryeo, it is important to study the connection between Goryeo and the early Joseon court music.

Records on court music produced by the Joseon dynasty can be found in ritual texts, musical texts, and musical notations. Ritual texts include *Gukjo oryeyi* (*Five Rites of State*), *Gujo sok oryeyi* (*Supplement to the Five Rites of State*), *Chungwantonggo* (*A Compendium on the Activities of the Ministry of Rites*), and *Daehanyejeon* (*Ritual Manual of the Korean Empire*). As these works stipulate the norms of practicing the five state rites, they provide useful information on how court music was used at each occasion. Musical texts cover the following details: theories of musical performances; making of musical instruments; instrumentation; tuning up of instruments; repertoires; the forms of court dance and *ilmu* (ritual dance); attires of musicians, singers, and dancers; and ritual supplies. A best example is *Akhakgwebeom* (*Guide to the Study of Music*)

6. The instrumentation of ensembles for sacrificial rites has four types according to the social class: *gunghyeon* 宮懸 for the emperor; *heonhyeon* 軒懸 for kings; *panhyeon* 判懸 for high ministers; and *teukhyeon* 特懸 for noblemen. These classifications were based on the placements of bells and chimes. *Gunghyeon* has three bells and three chimes in all the four directions; *heonhyeon* has three bells and three chimes in the north, east, and west; *panhyeon* has two bell and two chimes in the east and west; and *teukhyeon* has three bells and three chimes in the east (Chapter 97, *Jeungbomunheonbigyo*).

published during the reign of King Seongjong, which contains everything about performing music at ritual occasions. Other musical works such as *Siakhwaseong* 詩樂和聲, *Aktong* 樂通, and *Akwongosa* 樂院故事 do not deal with this subject as much comprehensively as *Akhakgwebeom* (*Guide to the Study of Music*). However, comprehensive analysis of them will provide insight into how the Joseon court music changed overtime.

Currently, there are five musical notations extant from the Joseon period, which are *Sejongillok akkbo* 世宗實錄樂譜, *Sejosillok akbo* 世祖實錄樂譜, *Siyong hyangakbo* 時用鄉樂譜, *Daeak hubo* 大樂後譜, and *Sogak wonbo* 俗樂源譜. The former two (Figures 10 and 11) are contained in *Joseon wangjo sillok* (*Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*). Musical notations published by the court give no details of their pieces and compilation background. Unveiling such details remained a task for researchers. Now investigation is underway into the connection among the songs included in notations and their transition process as well as the structure and characteristics (Condit 1976).

The court also recorded the movements of dance, which is called *mubo* (dance notation 舞譜). Notations for *ilmu*, which was performed at sacrificial rite survive now, but there are no extant ones for royal banquet dance. *Siyongmubo* (Figure 12) records a part of dance performed at sacrificial rite for the royal ancestors. As seen below, in rectangles formed with five horizontal lines and three vertical lines, dance movements were drawn with their names. This is a valuable source for study of *ilmu* from the early Joseon period.

As for court dance, *Jeongje mudo holgi* (*Record of Court Dance* 呈才舞圖笏記) is considered a valuable material, which illustrates the arrangements of dancers

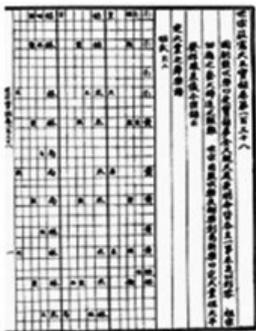


Figure 10.
Sejong sillok akkbo



Figure 11. *Sejo sillok akbo*



Figure 12. *Siyong mubo*

and sequence of movements. The drawings give details of the role of each movement and the names of female or boy dancers. In the case of female dancers, information on where they belonged to or came from was recorded. Currently, 14 works of such records have survived as a useful source for research into court dance and music from the late Joseon (The Academy of Korean Studies 1995).

During the Joseon period, when large events were held at the court, they were documented in both writing and painting as a reference for future generations, which is called *uigwe*. Currently, more than 600 works of *uigwe* have been handed down. Among them, details of banquets and making musical instruments for the occasions provide a wealth of information on court music. For example, records of banquets such as *Jinyeon uigwe* 進宴儀軌 and *Jinchan uigwe* 進饌儀軌 contain details of the whole procedures of the event and related illustrations, which allow readers to get a grip on how the event was actually held, what and how musical pieces were played, and even reward for performers. As for *uigwe* on making musical instruments, they were usually devoted to instruments for sacrificial rites. Thus, they provide useful information for research into the way of playing sacrificial music and history of change in instruments used.

Among records published at the court, those of music can be found in various sources. One example is *deungnok* 謄錄. They contain important administrative matters, which were recorded by relevant offices. They also include suggestions made by officials. For instance, *Akjang deungnok* 樂掌謄錄 was a record of 116 years by the Ministry of Rites, which includes various suggestions for such issues as the training and payment of *akgong* and *aksaeng*; music for the rite to the royal ancestors; the making of musical instruments; republication of *Akhakgwebeom* (*Guide to the Study of Music*); and welcoming Qing envoys (Song 1980). Suggestions for court music can also be found in other various types of *deungnok*.

Royal Documentary Painting

The Joseon court considered recording of events very important. All the events and occasions held at court were documented in various ways both in writing and painting. Such paintings provide a straightforward and accurate representation of the incident or occasion. They are called royal documentary paintings to set themselves apart from those produced from private sources such

as paintings of gathering by noblemen or commoners.

Royal documentary painting is classified into two types: paintings contained in *uigwe* (*uigwedo*) and those produced by government offices (*gungjung haengsado*). Paintings for *uigwe* were produced according to the ritual regulations and should be approved by the king before being used as a reference to the holding of an occasion. They focused on the event itself with no background portrayed. Paintings produced at offices were mostly done voluntarily by officials who attended the occasion. They come in various types from the “Illustration of Royal Banquet at Seochongdae” of 1560 to folding screens of royal banquets of the 19th century, and most of them featured various types of royal feasts such as *jinyeon*, *jinchan*, *chillimsayeon*, and *gogyeon* (Park 2000).

As royal documentary paintings focused on events attended by the king or those held according to the ritual law, the format and the painting technique were also employed based on ritual regulations. As the purpose of this type of painting is to provide an accurate representation, it described figures and the building layout as accurately as possible though sometimes the sequence of the event was not well represented or the illustration was out of perspective.

Others

Records on the Joseon court music were also produced by individuals, most of whom were directly and indirectly involved in this subject. Best examples are Bak Yeon 朴堧 (1378-1458) and Seong Hyeon 成俔 (1439-1504). Bak Yeon was involved in the reorganization of the *aak* system during the time of King Sejong and related records are contained in his collected work entitled, *Nangyeugo* 蘭溪遺稿. Seong Hyeon participated in the compilation of *Akhakgwebeom* (*Guide to the Study of Music*), and his records on music are included in his assorted writings, *Yongjae chonghwa* 慵齋叢話.

Other private sources of historical significance can be found in works of scholars of Practical Learning in the late Joseon, which are as follows: *Akhakpyeongo* (*A Book on the Theory of Music from Goryeo and Joseon* 樂學便考) by Yi Hyeongsang; *Seonghosaseol* (*Literary Miscellany* 星湖僊說) by Yi Ik; *Akseogojon* (*Examination of Documents on Music* 樂書孤存) by Jeong Yakyong; and *Oju yeonmun jangjeon sango* (*Collection of Writings on Various Topics* 五洲衍文長箋散稿) by Yi Gyugyeong.

Conclusion

The court music of the Joseon dynasty can be approached in various aspects. First of all, music itself is a subject to study but more importantly it should be understood as part of royal culture of Joseon in connection with its governing ideology. In the Joseon period, music was not just an object of appreciation but a representation of ritual norm performed according to proper protocols. In a dynasty which favored propriety and music rather than punishment as a governing policy, music also served as a political means. It was used to make a distinction between king and subject but also to show the ruler's love for the general populace by sharing it with them.

The court music of the early Joseon inherited that of Goryeo, and thus there is a close connection between them. This is evidenced by the fact that when new *hyangak* pieces were created during the reign of King Sejong, they were based on Goryeo *hyangak* and *gochwak*. Therefore, the Joseon court music is a 1000-year historical legacy, acting as a bridge between Goryeo and today.

The Joseon court music encompassed not only Goryeo *hyangak* but also *aak* and *saak* from Song China. Part of *gyobangak* and *daeseong aak*, which had been introduced to Goryeo from Song China were also handed down to the Joseon court music, some of which are played even today. In this respect, the Joseon court music can be a subject to comparative study of the Chinese original and its variances found in the Joseon court music.

The Joseon court music has been studied by domestic and foreign scholars on various topics. For study of this subject, it is necessary to use primary sources, which are mostly in classical Chinese. That often acted as a barrier to scholars, but now, fortunately, most of them were translated in Korean and accessible via the Internet. The Joseon court music needs to be explored from an outside perspective. Although Korean studies has gained growing attention from western scholarship, the Korean court music remains less investigated, with folk music receiving attention only recently. There were pioneers of this area in western scholarships such as Keith Pratt, Jonathan Condit, and Robert C. Provine, who were active in the 20th century. It is hoped that more scholars outside will join in the still new field.

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Abstract

This paper focused on Joseon court music in light of cultural history and symbolic aspects. The court music was primarily performed for *oryeui*, or the five state rituals, and thus it is important to understand it in connection with rituals. Therefore, this paper provided an understanding of court music in cultural history by exploring its symbols and their meanings. This paper classified court music into two—sacrificial and ceremonial ones—and provided details of them. It explained the use and characteristics of royal ensembles and introduced musical pieces played by them as well as dance performers. Moreover, it also described how the performance tradition of the Joseon court music has been transmitted today. The symbols and their meanings of the court music were explored by being divided into several topics. Instead of covering all about them, this paper singled out some major types of court music for this subject, which include as follows: sacrificial rituals and music that signified royal legitimacy and authority; ceremonial music that represented the hierarchical order and friendly relations with neighboring countries; *saak*, or music bestowed by the king; *daesaryeo* and music, a symbol of military leadership; the policy of *sadaegyorin* (served the great and keep good relations with neighbors) and music; state funerals and soundless music; and music as a symbol of a vassal country and *wonguak* (music for the rite to heaven) as an imperial symbol. These topics will help understand the court music as part of royal culture of Joseon. To promote studies of the Joseon court music and overall traditional Korean music in both domestic and foreign scholarship, it is important to provide information on related historical sources. Thus, this paper presented them in the final chapter. This paper focused on Joseon court music in cultural aspects and thus academic achievements, though having been produced in various areas, were not covered. It is hoped that this paper will help scholars abroad have basic understandings of the Joseon court music and inspire their academic passion for this field.

Keywords: Joseon court music, *oryeui*, understanding in cultural history, symbol and meanings, documents on court music