



# Changdeokgung Palace Complex and the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty

## Changdeokgung Palace Complex

### *World Heritage Inscription of Changdeokgung*

Changdeokgung (Changdeokgung Palace Complex) is one of many palaces of the Joseon dynasty. It was listed as Korea's 4<sup>th</sup> World Heritage at the 21<sup>st</sup> World Heritage Committee, held in Naples, Italy in 1997. Of the Criteria required for inscription, Changdeokgung was recognized as having met the following Criteria: Criterion (ii) to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning, or landscape design; Criterion (iii) to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared; and Criterion (iv) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble, or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.

The World Heritage Committee describes the outstanding universal values (OUV) of Changdeokgung as World Heritage as follows<sup>1</sup>:

Criterion (ii): Changdeokgung had a great influence on the development of Korean architecture, garden design and landscape planning, and related arts for many centuries. The main gate of the palace is the Donhwamun

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\* For non-English words including Korean ones, the new (revised) Romanization convention established by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism of Korea is basically used in the *Review of Korean Studies*. However, for the place names of world heritages in this manuscript, the Romanization convention and the usage of the World Heritage Committee or Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea are exceptionally adopted since they have been already worldwide known.

1. Available at <http://whc.unesco.org>.

Gate, situated in the southwest corner of the grounds. From the entrance road at the main gate, the *jeongjeon* (main hall) can be reached after making two sharp turns. The layout of the entrance road is directed by the natural terrain and landscape; it differs from the layout of Gyeongbokgung or other palaces in China, which sits on a single straight axis that dissects the grounds from North to South. Changdeokgung's palace layout, where the buildings show harmony with the natural terrain and the surrounding environment, was created by mutual exchanges of palace architecture between Korea and China, while also displaying the unique creativity of Korea's own palace architecture.

Criterion (iii): Changdeokgung exemplifies the traditional *pungsu* (geomancy) principles and Confucianism through its architecture and landscape. The site selection and setting of the palace were based upon *pungsu* principles, whilst the buildings were laid out both functionally and symbolically in accordance to Confucian ideology that together portrays Joseon dynasty's unique outlook on the world.

Criterion (iv): Changdeokgung is outstanding in that it successfully followed the traditional palace architecture, while adding its own creative modifications. It is an outstanding example of East Asian palace architecture and garden design, exceptional for the way in which the buildings are integrated into and harmonized with the natural setting, adapting to the topography and retaining indigenous tree cover.

The three criteria all focus on the physical values of Changdeokgung, which is because tangible properties on the ground are considered for World Heritages categorized into the three types—cultural heritage, natural heritage, and mixed heritage with both cultural and natural attributes. The Forbidden City of China or Gyeongbokgung, which is the main palace of Joseon, have buildings lined up vertically along a straight axis from North to South on the palace grounds. However, Changdeokgung is unique in that it has a horizontal layout. This is interpreted as having internalized the norms of palaces in East Asia, while adding a creative twist unique to the palaces of Joseon. Based on this interpretation, the World Heritage Committee has recognized that Changdeokgung “exhibits an important interchange of human values,” as explained in Criterion (ii). This is actually a very difficult criteria to be acknowledged in the World Heritage inscription and therefore is particularly

noteworthy.

The World Heritage Committee also recognized harmonization between the traditional *pungsu* principles and Confucianism. This is interpreted as the elements mentioned in the criteria to have become fully embedded in the Joseon society and together portray the Joseon dynasty's unique outlook on the world. Changdeokgung was built on a rather narrow piece of land, and thus the palace architecture was greatly affected by the natural terrain. Successfully combining Joseon's view on nature and the Confucian character in a palace can be acknowledged as an outstanding achievement in itself. And lastly, the World Heritage Committee recognized that the final result of such complex characteristics is also a great achievement in environmental design.

Another frequently asked question regarding Changdeokgung as World Heritage is why not Gyeongbokgung but Changdeokgung was inscribed. In terms of hierarchy, Gyeongbokgung is definitely in higher order as the main palace of the dynasty; it is much larger in scale, faithfully follows the principles in palace layout, and served as the main site of all royal court rites as the main palace of the dynasty. However, when one compares Gyeongbokgung and Changdeokgung, the OUV of Changdeokgung becomes evident. Gyeongbokgung, undoubtedly, has outstanding values of its own and could one day be listed as World Heritage. Furthermore, it should be noted that as far as World Heritage is concerned, there is no hierarchical order among the different palaces of Joseon. The fact that Changdeokgung is a World Heritage does not imply that it is superior to other palaces. Each property is evaluated under different OUVs which the entire humanity must work together to protect and conserve. Gyeongbokgung and other palaces simply have “different values” from those of Changdeokgung. This fact should be carefully considered when conducting comparative analysis of different properties for the nomination dossier.

### *Palace with the Longest History*

Although not directly mentioned in the Criteria, the fact that Changdeokgung is the longest standing palace among the palaces of the Joseon dynasty, continuously providing testimony to Joseon's outlook of the world, is also an important value of this property. Changdeokgung was built in 1405, under the reign of King Taejong, the third king of the Joseon dynasty. It was only 10 years

ago that Gyeongbokgung was completed nearby as the main palace and had been in use for some time. Therefore, it could be somewhat puzzling as to why King Taejong built Changdeokgung. While it is not clear why a second palace was built only a decade after Gyeongbokgung was finished, one can assume that multiple reasons affected the construction of Changdeokgung: the issue of legitimacy of King Taejong, who came into power after the Strife of Princes and the fact that his father Higher King Taejo was still alive all could have impacted the decision to construct another palace. After its completion, Changdeokgung remained witness to the long history of the Joseon dynasty as its key palace, with just a brief exception during the Japanese invasion.

Gyeongbokgung was the very first palace to be built by the dynasty but was burnt down during the Japanese invasion; until its reconstruction work was started in 1865, Gyeongbokgung remained in ruins for over 270 years. Gyeongbokgung's absence naturally led Changdeokgung to become the *de facto* main palace. Various palace facilities, including the Gwolnaegaksa (government offices within the palace), were set up in Changdeokgung, as it served as the site for various state rites, being also mentioned as such in Chapter "Goi" (Changes and Modifications 考異) of *Gukjo sok oryewi* (*Amended Five Rites of the State* 國朝續五禮儀). When Gyeongbokgung was restored during the reign of King Gojong, Changdeokgung stepped down from the main palace. However, it served as the main stage in key state rites and as the living quarters for the royal family throughout the Joseon period. Changdeokgung remained a part of the living history in modern times; King Sunjong, the last monarch of both Joseon and the DaeHan jeguk (the Great Han Empire), who came to the throne when his father King Gojong was forced to abdicate, resided in Changdeokgung. Yi Bangja, Crown Princess Uimin of Korea, also lived in Nakseonjae of Changdeokgung from 1963 to 1989.

The history of Gyeonghuigung and Deoksugung, on the other hand, is limited to the later years of Joseon. Gyeonghuigung was built under the reign of King Gwanghaegun after the Japanese invasion, following the construction of Ingyeonggung. With Gyeongbokgung burnt down, King Gwanghaegun should have chosen Changdeokgung as the main palace; however, in fact, he chose to build a separate palace, Ingyeonggung, west to the grounds of Gyeongbokgung. But the construction of Ingyeonggung did not go as planned. King Gwanghaegun decided he would build yet another smaller palace first and stay there. This smaller palace is Gyeonghuigung. When King Injo took the

throne after a coup, Ingyeonggung was demolished, while Gyeonghuigung was saved. Gyeonghuigung was used by King Yeongjo, and the then second son of the crown prince Sado and later King Jeongjo for quite some time. However, Gyeonghuigung served a limited purpose; it was mainly used to house the ancestral tablets during the expansion work of Jongmyo Shrine, and functioned as a royal palace for a limited period. Even to this day, very little physical properties have remained from Gyeonghuigung, and most of its grounds are occupied by private civilian property.

After the Japanese invasion, many palaces, Jongmyo Shrine, and Sajik (alter of the land and grain) had to be restored. During this period, King Seonjo stayed at a temporary location, which later became converted to a palace for the DaeHan jeguk (the Great Han Empire) in the years of King Gojong. Though short-lived, Deoksugung also served as the empire's palace. Deoksugung has a special place in the history of palaces in Joseon: it has Western-styled buildings such as the Seokjojeon; it did not follow the traditional principles of palace location in a city; and it had special relationship with other foreign legations at the time.

Another important palace that should be considered along with Changdeokgung is Changgyeonggung. Changgyeonggung was built under the direction of King Seonjong in 1483 and was used for a very long time, along with Changdeokgung. Since Changdeokgung lacked space, Changgyeonggung served as the living quarters for the crown prince (*donggungjeon*) and the queen dowager (*daebijeon*). Although Changgyeonggung is also an independent palace, it was also used in conjunction with Changdeokgung, as the two are located side by side. In terms of the years of existence as a palace, Changdeokgung and Changgyeonggung are about 80 years apart. The two also have different physical attributes, as Changgyeonggung was turned into a zoo under the Japanese colonial rule.

All in all, of the many palaces of Joseon, Changdeokgung has the longest history, served the most kings, and was the *de facto* main palace in the late Joseon period, as well as being the palace where the last members of the Joseon royal family resided. Changdeokgung stands witness to the rise and fall of the Joseon dynasty.

### *Displaying the Typical Features of Joseon's Palace*

Within the East Asian context, a palace had established itself as a distinctive architectural category. Scholars regarded the rule of *li* 禮 of the ancient Zhou dynasty 周 of China as the ultimate form of rule. Likewise, the palaces from the period were accepted to be the archetype. Theories on royal chambers are complicated and span over a long period of time but can be explained with a few common characteristics regarding the layout of the palace.

First, the key building is the main hall for the king at the center, with a courtyard. This main hall and courtyard would be surrounded by a long rectangular shaped corridor or a wall. The corridor at the front of the courtyard would have an entrance gate leading into the courtyard. The gate-courtyard-main hall would all be aligned on a central axis in an orderly manner. At the main hall, there would be a king's throne. The subjects who participated in the various events held at the palace would line up on the courtyard. This would be the typical formation for a royal event or ceremony, which fits well with the *mundangjae* (traditional layout system of placing the gate and the main hall for the king in alignment).

The next most important building was the *jeongjeon* (main hall). From the most outer gate of the palace, multiple sets of gate and long rectangular shaped chambers would be repeatedly positioned, all the way to the *jeongjeon*. The number of sets of gate and courtyard that formed the entrance axis was pre-determined; five for an imperial palace, where an emperor reigned, and three for that of a state where a king reigned. The layout inside a palace is divided into two; the public outer court, where political state affairs were handled, and the inner court which the members of the royal family used as their living space.

All the building spaces and the gates along the entrance axis are aligned along a single axis, which in some cases runs across the entire city from North to South; from the most outer gates to all the gates and main hall area and the bedchamber area at the very back of the palace, the entire layout of the palace would sit strictly on the orderly axis, enforced as a strict standard. This will be easily understood when one thinks of the Forbidden City in Beijing or Gyeongbokgung in Seoul.

Changdeokgung, being a royal palace, also needed to follow this standardized rule. However, Changdeokgung was a secondary palace and had chosen a rather narrow strip of land as its grounds; while it followed most of

the common rules, it could not place all of its buildings along a single axis that ran north to south. This could have been seen as a disadvantage. But Changdeokgung's architectural values were achieved through solving the challenges caused by this spatial limitation.

The architects of Changdeokgung found a clever way to go around the problem. They adhered to the traditional layout of palace architecture in each unit of the palace. But when it came to combining the different units, they chose a horizontal, parallel west-to-east layout instead of the traditional vertical north-to-south layout. This way, each unit would face south, but the different units would sit in a horizontal layout, thus making optimal use of the sloped and narrow grounds. Each building is placed from west to east, according to the order of their importance, effectively using the limited space: Injeongjeon Hall, which served as the main hall, is on the west side; Seonjeongjeon Hall, as the *pyeonjeon* (royal council hall), is in the middle; Daejojeon Hall, which is the bedchamber, is on the east side.

The sloped topography, which would have been viewed as a challenge, turned into one of the most unique merits of the palace. In palace architecture, it is customary not to create spaces or place objects that would block one's view. That is why, in most palaces, you cannot find forests; instead, artificial features would be placed to fill the scene. So, the view behind Injeongjeon Hall of Changdeokgung, where you see a thick forest, is something that would not be found in Gyeongbokgung. The same could be said of the Nakseonjae area, the space behind the *gwolnaegaksa* (government offices within the palace). The huge rear garden behind Changdeokgung, aptly named Huwon (the Rear Garden), clearly states what the environmental design of Changdeokgung aimed for. The Rear Garden of Changdeokgung remains one of the most precious ecological heritage of Seoul.

Had Changdeokgung been the only palace that resorted to such creative solutions, we might not be able to refer to it as "the unique creativity in palace architecture of Korea." However, the parallel layout used in Changdeokgung was repeatedly applied in Gyeonghuigung and Deoksugung. Therefore, we can confidently refer to this layout as a representative palace architecture of the Joseon dynasty.

### ***Heritage with Integrity and Authenticity***

In the inscription of World Heritage, integrity, authenticity, and the overall protection and management systems of the property are as important as the criteria. Referencing the description for inscription, Changdeokgung is said to incorporate all key components required in Korean palace architecture over centuries and also conforms to the Confucian principles and protocols in its spatial layout, arrangement of buildings, gardens, and forested mountain landscape at the rear of the palace.

Changdeokgung has all necessary components, including the outer and inner courts, as well as the rear garden. The buildings, landscaping, and the natural topography create harmony within the Changdeokgung complex. The fact that the entire palace is designated as the state-designated Cultural Heritage is noted in the integrity of the property.

The buildings within Changdeokgung and its rear garden and forest have been kept intact since its reconstruction in the late Joseon period. The natural topography and landscape of the palace also remain well preserved and protected. Restoration or repair work for whatever has been altered during the Japanese colonial years or has aged over the years, are being performed by certified craftsmen, based on thorough literature review and research along with traditional methods and materials. This also testifies to the integrity of the property.

The most important piece of painting in understanding the palace of Joseon is the “Donggwoldo.” Painted in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it is a masterpiece that portrays the Changdeokgung, Changgyeonggung, and the Rear Garden in realistic and detailed representations. The “Donggwoldohyeong,” drawn up in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, is a layout drawing of the palace, clearly indicating whether each block of space is a room or *maru* (space between the rooms covered with wooden floors). *Gunggwolji* is another valuable document that shed light on the history and important events of each building within the palace. *Uigwe* (*The Records of State Events*) also provide information on all the construction work at the palace, detailing what kind of work was performed, when and how. The annotated pictures or the illustrations included in the *Uigwe* give a visual account of the shape of each building. *Gukjo oryuei* (*Five Rites of the State*) and other related documents on royal palace rites, as well as other historical documents such as *Joseon wangjo sillok* (*The Annals of the*

*Joseon Dynasty*), *Ilseongnok* (*Court Chronicle*), and *Seungjeongwon ilgi* (*Daily Record of the Grand Secretariat*) all provide specific explanations related to Changdeokgung and its authenticity.

The Cultural Heritage Protection Act clearly covers the protection and management responsibilities for Changdeokgung, which is designated as Historic Site. Its individual buildings and plantings within the complex have also been designated as a state-designated Cultural Heritage under the Cultural Heritage Protection Act and thus are protected and managed: Donhwamun Gate, Injeongmun Gate, Daejojeon Hall, Old Seonwonjeon Shrine, Seonjeongjeon Hall, and Huijeongdang Hall as Treasure; Injeongjeon Hall as National Treasure; and Chinese juniper tree and actinidia arguta plum-tree as Natural Monument to name a few. Not only as a cultural heritage, Changdeokgung also has key elements of a natural heritage. The surrounding area of the Changdeokgung Palace Complex has been designated as a Historic Cultural Environment Protection Area, enabling sufficient protection of the palace despite being located at the very center of a metropolis. The Changdeokgung Management Office of the Cultural Heritage Administration is in charge of day-to-day management, which is also an added strength to the property.

Even without the affirmation of the World Heritage Committee, Changdeokgung is clearly the epitome of the royal court culture of the Joseon dynasty, not just as tangible heritage but also as intangible heritage that includes all royal court rites, food cultures, etc. It is our duty to guard and protect this valuable heritage on behalf of humanity.

## **The Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty**

### ***World Heritage Inscription of Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty***

Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty are Korea's 8<sup>th</sup> World Heritage, listed at the 33<sup>rd</sup> World Heritage Committee held in Serbia, Spain in 2009. The property is a serial nomination, composed of a collection of 40 tombs scattered over 18 locations. The property is located in multiple administrative districts ranging from Seoul, Gyeonggido, and Gangwondo. Among Korea's World Heritage, Haeinsa Temple's Janggyeong Panjeon (the Depositories for the Tripitaka Korean

Woodblocks), Jongmyo Shrine, Hwaseong Fortress, and Namhansanseong are listed as a single nomination. There are also many serial nominations with multiple components in Korea, including the following: Seokguram Grotto and Bulguksa Temple; Gochang, Hwasun, and Ganghwa Dolmen Sites; Gyeongju Historic Areas; Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes; Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty; Historic Villages of Korea, Hahoe and Yangdong; Baekje Historic Areas; Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries in Korea; Seowon, Korean Neo-Confucian Academies; and the newest addition of Getbol, Korean Tidal Flats. So, Korea already has many serial nominations inscribed on the World Heritage list. In particular, the properties that span over multiple administrative districts goes through a much more complicated preparation stage, as it requires extensive coordination among the different local governments.

The Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty form a collection of 40 tombs scattered over 18 locations. The Royal Tombs in different regions are located under different administrative districts, but all are directly managed by the Cultural Heritage Administration, who naturally served a significant role in the overall process of inscribing the property as World Heritage. The World Heritage Committee acknowledged the value of the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty as World Heritage as follows<sup>2</sup>:

Criterion (iii): Within the context of Confucian cultures, the integrated approach of the Royal Tombs of Joseon to nature and the universe has resulted in a distinctive and significant funeral tradition. Through the application of *pungsu* principles and the retention of the natural landscape, a memorable type of sacred place has been created for the practice of ancestral rituals.

Criterion (iv): The Royal Tombs of Joseon are an outstanding example of a type of architectural ensemble and landscape that illustrates a significant stage in the development of burial mounds within the context of Korean and East Asian tombs. The royal tombs, in their response to settings and in their unique (and regularized) configuration of buildings, structures, and related elements, manifest and reinforce the centuries old tradition and living practice of ancestral worship through a prescribed series of rituals.

Criterion (vi): The Royal Tombs of Joseon are directly associated with a living tradition of ancestral worship through the performance of prescribed rites. During the Joseon period, state ancestral rites were held regularly, and except for periods of political turmoil in the last century, they have been conducted on an annual basis by the Royal Family Organization and the worshipping society for each royal tomb.

According to the description, the values of Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty can be summarized into the following: the evidence of funeral tradition under the Confucian cultures; the outstanding example of high-quality landscape and environmental design; the archetype demonstrating unity and overall development process of ancestral rites that is practiced even to this day in its fullest form. It is particularly significant that the intangible values of an ancestral ritual have been acknowledged. The World Heritage Committee also considers that Criterion (vi) to be directly or tangibly associated with the events or living traditions, with ideas, with beliefs, or with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significances—is also partially recognized in this property. The World Heritage Committee advises that Criterion (vi) should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria. There are only two World Heritages of Korea that have been recognized under this criterion: Haeinsa Temple's Janggyeong Panjeon and the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty. The Haeinsa Temple is a tangible heritage, but since the Tripitaka Woodblocks, which is as a movable heritage not attached to land, is an integral part of the OUV of the property, the above criterion was acknowledged. The ancestral rites at the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty, on the other hand, merits to be on the World Heritage list on its own, as an independent intangible heritage: it served as the basis of the OUV of the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty as World Heritage. At the time of nomination, Criterion (ii) also was presented, citing the exchange of East Asia's Confucianism and the traditional ideas of Korea. This, however, was not successful.

Korea has several World Heritages that are related to the funeral rites and ancestral rites; Jongmyo Shrine, Gyeongju Historic Areas, Gochang, Hwasun and Ganghwa Dolmen Sites, and Baekje Historic Areas are directly related to the theme, while Seowon, Korean Neo-Confucian Academies is indirectly related with the practice of ancestral rites. North Korea and China have jointly listed the Complex of Koguryo Tombs, which is a representative heritage of

2. Available at <http://whc.unesco.org>.

the ancient royal tombs. The Gaya Tumuli, which is on the World Heritage tentative list, is also worthy of mention. Other countries also have burial tombs as World Heritage. Then in what context does Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty differ from the other existing World Heritage and offer the OUV of its own?

### *Including All Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty*

Joseon dynasty reigned for almost 500 years. It is not common to find a dynasty that lasted for so long, and even more uncommon for the royal tombs of its rulers to remain intact in its original form. The royal tombs had to be located near the capital, and Hanyang, the capital of Joseon, continues to serve as the capital of the State Party, with the changed name of Seoul. Taking into account the massive expansion of Seoul and the metropolitan area, the fact that the property remains intact, with no damage, is in and of itself testimony to its remarkable value. This was only possible because the people of Korea cherished the memories of the Joseon dynasty as well as upheld the tradition with respect and honor.

The burial sites of Joseon royal families are designated as *neung* (or *reung* or *leung* for phonetic variation), *won*, or *myo* according to their royal status. *Neung* is for kings, posthumous kings and their consorts. *Won* is for the crown princes, their consorts, and the birth parents of kings adopted to ensure a successor to the throne. *Myo*, being the lowest in terms of ranks, is for other royal family members, including princes and princesses (including those born outside official marriages) as well as royal concubines. There are a total of 119 royal tombs, of which 42 are *neung*, 13 *won*, and 64 *myo* in the Joseon dynasty. The World Heritage Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty include only *neung*. The two Joseon Royal Tombs in DPRK (North Korea) are Jereung, the tomb of Queen Sineui, the first consort of the founding monarch Taejo, and Hureung, the tomb of the second King Jeongjong; the two are not included in the World Heritage Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty. The list of 40 royal tombs included in the serial nomination of the property are as follows.

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| 1  | Geonwolleurung 健元陵 | King Taejo (Joseon's 1 <sup>st</sup> monarch)  |
| 2  | Jeongneung 貞陵      | Queen Sindeok (Taejo's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort)  |
| 3  | Heolleung 獻陵       | King Taejong (Joseon's 3 <sup>rd</sup> monarch) and Queen Wongyeong (Taejong's consort)  |
| 4  | Yeongneung 英陵      | King Sejong (Joseon's 4 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Soheon (Sejong's consort)   |
| 5  | Hyeolleung 顯陵      | King Munjong (Joseon's 5 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Hyeondeok (Munjong's consort)  |
| 6  | Jangneung 長陵       | King Danjong (Joseon's 6 <sup>th</sup> monarch)  |
| 7  | Sareung 思陵         | Queen Jeongsun (Danjong's consort)   |
| 8  | Gwangneung 光陵      | King Sejo (Joseon's 7 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Jeonghui (Sejo's consort)   |
| 9  | Changneung 昌陵      | King Yejong (Joseon's 8 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Ansun (Yejong's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort)  |
| 10 | Gongneung 恭陵       | Queen Jangsun (Yejong's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort)   |
| 11 | Seolleung 宣陵       | King Seongjong (Joseon's 9 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Jeonghyeon (Seongjong's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort)   |
| 12 | Sulleung 順陵        | Queen Gonghye (Seongjong's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort)  |
| 13 | Jeongneung 靖陵      | King Jungjong (Joseon's 11 <sup>th</sup> monarch)  |
| 14 | Olleung 溫陵         | Queen Dangyeong (Jungjong's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort)   |
| 15 | Huireung 徽陵        | Queen Janggyeong (Jungjong's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort)  |
| 16 | Taereung 泰陵        | Queen Munjeong (Jungjong's 3 <sup>rd</sup> consort)  |
| 17 | Hyoreung 孝陵        | King Injong (Joseon's 12 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Inseong (Injong's consort)   |
| 18 | Gangneung 康陵       | King Myeongjong (Joseon's 13 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Insun (Myeongjong's consort)   |
| 19 | Mongneung 穆陵       | King Seonjo (Joseon's 14 <sup>th</sup> monarch), Queen Uiin (Seonjo's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort), and Queen Inmok (Seonjo's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort)       |
| 20 | Jangneung 章陵       | King Injo (Joseon's 16 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Inyeol (Injo's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort)  |
| 21 | Hwireung 徽陵        | Queen Jangnyeol (Injo's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort)   |
| 22 | Yeongneung 永陵      | King Hyojong (Joseon's 17 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Inseon (Hyojong's consort)  |
| 23 | Sungneung 崇陵       | King Hyeonjong (Joseon's 18 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Myeongseong (Hyeonjong's consort)   |
| 24 | Myeongneung 明陵     | King Sukjong (Joseon's 19 <sup>th</sup> monarch), Queen Inhyeon (Sukjong's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort), and Queen Inwon (Sukjong's 3 <sup>rd</sup> consort) |
| 25 | Ingneung 翼陵        | Queen Ingyeong (Sukjong's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort)   |

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| 26 | Uireung 懿陵     | King Gyeongjong (Joseon's 20 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Seonui (Gyeongjong's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort)  |
| 27 | Hyereung 惠陵    | Queen Danui (Gyeongjong's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort)   |
| 28 | Wolleung 元陵    | King Yeongjo (Joseon's 21 <sup>st</sup> monarch) and Queen Jeongsun (Yeongjo's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort)  |
| 29 | Hongneung 洪陵   | Queen Jeongseong (Yeongjo's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort)   |
| 30 | Geolleung 健陵   | King Jeongjo (Joseon's 22 <sup>nd</sup> monarch) and Queen Hyoui (Jeongjo's consort)   |
| 31 | Illeung 仁陵     | King Sunjo (Joseon's 23 <sup>rd</sup> monarch) and Queen Sunwon (Sunjo's consort)  |
| 32 | Gyeongneung 敬陵 | King Heonjong (Joseon's 24 <sup>th</sup> monarch), Queen Hyohyeon (Heonjong's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort), and Queen Hyejeong (Heonjong's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort)      |
| 33 | Yereung 睿陵     | King Cheoljong (Joseon's 25 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Queen Cheorin (Cheoljong's consort)   |
| 34 | Hongneung 洪陵   | Emperor Gojong (Joseon's 26 <sup>th</sup> monarch) and Empress Myeongseong (Gojong's consort)  |
| 35 | Yureung 裕陵     | Emperor Sunjong (Joseon's 27 <sup>th</sup> monarch), Empress Sunmyeong (Sunjong's 1 <sup>st</sup> consort), and Empress Sunjeong (Sunjong's 2 <sup>nd</sup> consort) |
| 36 | Gyeongneung 敬陵 | King Deokjong (Seongjong's father and posthumously given the title of king) and Queen Sohye (Deokjong's consort)   |
| 37 | Jangneung 章陵   | King Wonjong (Injo's father and posthumously given the title of king) and Queen Inheon (Wonjong's consort)   |
| 38 | Yungneung 隆陵   | King Jangjo (Jeongjo's father and posthumously given the title of king) and Queen Hyeongyeong (Jangjo's consort)   |
| 39 | Yeongneung 永陵  | King Jinjong (Jeongjo's uncle and posthumously given the title of king) and Queen Hyosun (Jinjong's consort)   |
| 40 | Sureung 綏陵     | King Munjo (Heonjong's father and posthumously given the title of king) and Queen Sinjeong (Munjo's consort)   |

Tombs of dethroned kings, King Yeonsangun and King Gwanhaegun's tombs were not built as a royal tomb, and therefore they are excluded from the property. On the other hand, the following tombs of posthumous kings are included in the World Heritage: King Deokjong, Seongjong's father; King Wonjong, Injo's father, King Jangjo, Jeongjo's father; King Jinjong, uncle of Jeongjo; and King Munjo, Heonjong's father. Where there were multiple queens, their tombs are included—but separate from the king's tombs. Some have been relocated, but this was the decision made by the authorities at that time and is important part of the history of management and operations of the

royal tombs. The full process of the formation and relocation of royal graveyards is explained in detail in each *Uigwe*, as well as other extant documents including *Joseon wangjo sillok* (*The Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*) providing historical verification of the tombs.

In conclusion, all royal tombs from the Joseon dynasty are included in the property, providing a full historic recount of how the sites for the royal tombs were determined, their layout and composition were set, they were managed, and the physical layout has changed over the years. Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty, along with the Jongmyo Shrine as World Heritage provide physical evidence to the history of Joseon.

### *Nature-friendly Construction of the Tombs, Evidenced by the Location and Layout*

Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty are a space for strict funeral rites for the royal ancestors, with its roots in Confucianism. The normative structure and layout of the royal tombs and its surrounding areas constitutes a complete archetype on its own. Surrounded by *hoseok* (retaining stones), the round burial mound, has its historical contexts in the tombs of people of power in Korea and other East Asian countries. The stone objects and the *gokjang* (curved wall) that surround the burial mound and the adjustments made to the natural terrain and landscape fill the space with an auspicious and solemn aura. In the flat open area at the front of the burial mound, a *jeongjagak* (T-shaped shrine 丁字閣) is built. This is a very unique building, in the shape of T when seen from above, that is not found in any other parts of the world. Starting from the *hongsalmun* (red-spiked gate), down the *sindo* (spirit road), and other associated buildings including a *subokbang* (guard's house), a *surakkan* (royal kitchen), a *bigak* (shed for stele), and *panwi* (ceremonial dais), all line up in a distinctive layout. The trees on the grounds of the burial mound area have been cleared to make an open space covered with grass. In place of the cleared trees, new ones were planted surrounding the area in harmony with the rest of the scenery. As a result, the entire area becomes quietly separated from the outer world, as one steps past the *myeongdangsu* (propitious stream) (National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage 2007-2017).

To create such a scenery, the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty needed great care in its ground selection. The royal tombs were located near the capital,

Hanyang, the old name of the present-day Seoul, due to the wishes of the kings who wanted to visit their fathers' graves as often as possible. And of course, the grounds satisfied the conditions of a perfect *pungsu* site. Topography wise, the selected site was located between a *jusan* (guardian hill) to its back and another mountain far out to its front, with an adequate level of difference in height between the two. It has good access to sunlight, rich soil, and good water drainage. When one enters any royal tomb, an immediate sense of solemnness, comfort, and ease can be felt.

The royal tombs consist of three areas: (1) burial area, (2) ceremonial area, and (3) entrance area. The burial area is a sacred space of the dead and comprises open, grassy space, the burial mound, and a spirit road that leads down to the T-shaped shrine. The T-shaped shrine is the focus of the ceremonial area, where ancestral rites were conducted to symbolize the meeting of the living and the dead. The shrine, in turn, is linked to the red spiked gate, which is the main entrance to the royal graveyard, by a worship road. Beyond the gate is the entrance area, which contains the forbidden stream with a stone bridge, the tomb keeper's house, and additional buildings used for preparation for ceremonies. Each area is appropriately divided by a slope, sacred water, and buildings, and at the same time it is also connected to one another through a shared sense of unity.

Joseon's royal tombs are basically built according to the strict Confucius principles: they are built under fixed rules for their formation. However, great care is also put into harmonizing the graveyard area with the surrounding nature. Sometimes, the last wishes of the deceased or how the deceased lived, as well as the wishes of their descendants and other circumstances of the times are reflected in the tomb's formation, allowing for slight changes that give each tomb its character.

In the early years, the systems from the Goryeo period were applied, with alterations added to the *jangmyeongdeung* (stone lanterns) and *mangjuseok* (stone watch pillars). As the *Gukjo oryuei* (*The Five Rites of the State*) was written up, prescribing how royal marital and funeral rites were to be performed, a unique funeral culture of Joseon came into being, thus applied to the formation of the royal graveyards. King Sejo enforced simplification of the rules applied to the formation of the royal tombs: the *byeongpungseok* (retaining stone) were changed to *nanganseok* (stone guardrail), stone chambers were replaced by a chamber decorated with lime plastered walls. By the times of King Yeongjo,

*Sangryebopyeon* (*The Revised Edition of State Funerals*), *Gukjo sok oryuei*, and other rules were set in place; practice of separating the statues of military and civil figures was abolished and all stone objects were made into their actual size. Towards the end of the dynasty, King Gojong assumed the title of emperor. His tomb was later built to befit the tomb of an emperor; more stone objects were placed in front of the *baejeon* (ceremonial platform), with more variety, too. Another big change was the construction of a rectangular shaped building, instead of a T-shaped shrine.

These features of the surrounding environment have satisfied Criteria (iii) and (iv); the concept of a tomb reflected the notion of death within the Confucius culture of East Asia, and artificial features blends harmoniously with nature. Presenting a type of an East Asian tomb system, the property also illustrates the characteristics of the Joseon period and the Korean peninsula (The World Heritage Committee).

### *The Value of the Property Completed through the Ancestral Rites*

Most importantly, it is meaningful that Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty was recognized in terms of Criterion (vi). While the dynasty has ended, its monarchs are being remembered with the highest prestige and respect by the posterity, who have kept the tradition of honoring their ancestors alive; and the property is an integral part of the rites. The State Party and the Korean society also spared no effort in supporting the practice of paying homage and respect to its ancestors, through tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The paying of homage and respect to the kings of Joseon are practiced at the Jongmyo Shrine and the royal tombs; Jongmyo Shrine is the place for paying homage to the ancestral hon, the soul of the spirit, while the royal tombs focus on the *baek*, the soul of the physical body, which is believed to remain in the body of the deceased.

According to the rules stipulated in the *Gukjo oryuei* (*Five Rites of the State*), ancestral rites at the royal graveyard are considered *gilbye* (auspicious rites 吉禮); they are held on the anniversary of death and also on the *sokjeol* which are prescribed days of each season.

To prepare for the ancestral rites, the worshippers prepared days in advance, making sure their mind and body were clean and purified. This testifies how important the royal graveyards were regarded. A day before the actual ancestral

rite, one would look around the royal tomb to check whether everything was in order. Rules on how the special food and dishes were prepared and placed on the ceremony table were all clearly specified, along with how the king would make his journey to the site. The details of the rite itself were also prescribed; from how the king would stand on the ceremonial platform, facing west, to how the ritual master would bow four times, light the incense, and offer several rounds of rice wine.

The funeral rites and ancestral rites at the royal tombs were strictly managed by the state, and thus their process is detailed in various books on rites. From *Gukjo oryeui (Five Rites of the State)* to *DaeHan yejeon (Revised Edition of the Rites of the State)*, details may have changed over time, but the overall framework has been kept intact. The rites at the royal tombs are honored and practiced to the present date because of such dedicated efforts of the posterity, sustained support from the state, and the existence of detailed documentation.

Each element of the royal tombs is an optimized spatial device for the ceremony. Following the minute changes made to the ceremony and the practical circumstances of the times, these elements of the royal tombs also experienced slight changes; the size of the T-shaped shrine and the shape of its roof were modified, as well as the burial mounds. The burial mounds have six different types; single mound, twin mounds, joint mound, triple parallel mounds, tomb with double mounds placed on separate hills, and tomb with double mounds vertically placed on the same hill. After the DaeHan jeguk (the Great Han Empire) was founded, the tombs of the empire's monarchs, King Gojong's Hongneung and King Sunjong's Yureung, display the characteristics of an imperial tomb; instead of the T-shaped shrine, a rectangular shaped shrine was built, and stone animals such as horse, camel, *haetae* (a mythical fire-eating animal), lion, elephant, and giraffe were lined up from the rectangular shrine to the red-spiked gate. These changes reflect the changed status of the nation, as well as the changes in the concepts of ceremonial rites. Numerous documents, such as *Salleungdogama uigwe (Records the Office of Royal Tomb Construction)*, also provide detailed explanations of the changes and background stories to each royal tombs, which add great value to the property.

Ancestral rites at the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty continue to be performed in its original format, even decades after the fall of the Joseon dynasty. Every year, on the day of state ancestral worship, the Royal Family Organization and the worshipping society for each tomb prepare for days

for the food and attire required for the rites, abiding by the ancestral rites' procedure. When ordinary people visit the royal tombs, it is customary to bow before entering the venue. The Confucian ancestral rites require much time and cost to prepare, and as such cannot be maintained without the sacrifice and dedication of the descendants, who will gladly take on the responsibility. Korea remains one of the few countries where the practice lives on. Of all the ancestral rites performed in Korea, the ancestral rites performed at the royal tombs are by far the most solemn and sacred.

### ***Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty as an Archetype of the Funeral Rites that Portray the History of Joseon.***

Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty reflect not only Confucianism, which is the most representative philosophy of the times, but also the philosophical concepts and world views based on diverse traditional ideologies and indigenous beliefs. The royal tombs have been well-conserved on the Korean peninsula as the venue of historical worship and respect, while functioning as a channel of passing down the outstanding historical and cultural values to the posterity. Also, the formation of Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty reflects Korea's unique creativity. Based on the interpretation and application of *pungsu*, Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty are located in areas with excellent surrounding scenery and environment. By preserving the original landscape as much as possible and by adding minimal artificial structure, the tombs achieve optimal harmony with nature. The unique characteristics of the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty are found in the unique uses of space to create different levels of terrain, which divides the human view to symbolize the different status of the living and the dead, and the artistic values of the buildings and the stone objects. The historical and cultural values of the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty are further highlighted through the ancestral rites that have continued to live on over six centuries, maintaining its original form along with the complete conservation of the royal tombs. The ancestral rites at the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty take place every year on the dates of the anniversary of the deaths of kings and queens. Apart from the direct descendants of the royal family, ordinary people also pay respect to their ancestors. This creates a solemn and majestic atmosphere for the ancestral rites at the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty.

In conclusion, the natural surroundings of the Royal Tombs of the Joseon

Dynasty followed the *pungsu* principles and were arranged with care in order to uphold the living tradition of worshiping the ancestors through the rites. Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty, with its divided areas, starting from the secular area and moving up to the sacred areas, and the uniquely shaped buildings and objects harmoniously remind us of the history of Joseon dynasty. As a serial nomination, the property of Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty provides evidence for a full understanding of the environment, layout, and structure of royal tombs. All of the elements have maintained their original function and pious atmosphere, especially so in the components of the property located far away from the impact of urbanization. In most cases, the only changes that have been made to the site would be the few gates that have been altered; all other form and design have remained intact. All in all, the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty have maintained integrity and authenticity.

Paying homage and respect towards the deceased is one of the most fundamental attitudes we share as humans. It is also common for a kingdom or a dynasty to have exerted extra care and attention to the tombs of its monarchs. The Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty, however, also beholds a unique cultural characteristic amid such universal and common aspects of a humankind. This is the reason why we, the posterity, must protect this property.

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