

# **British Perceptions of Joseon Korea as Reflected in Travel Literature of the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century<sup>1</sup>**

**Grace Koh**

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This paper proposes to bring to light British perceptions of Joseon Korea in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century by examining travel literature by four British authors: John Green (d. 1757), William Robert Broughton (1762-1821), Basil Hall (1788-1844), and John M'Leod (1777?-1820). Green's work is a compilation of earlier European travelogues, which sheds some light on European views of Korea prior to the first British expedition to Joseon. Broughton, Hall, and M'Leod's works are first hand accounts of their brief sojourn on Korean shores-the first two expeditions-in 1797 and 1816. In spite of the unwelcome reception by the locals and their constant plea for a swift departure, the British crew were still able to spend some time on Korean land and achieve some level of interaction with the Korean people, albeit limited in time and extent. The narratives are sparse in detail, but they provide valuable clues as to how Korea and Koreans may have been perceived and understood by the British at a time when the two cultures had very little contact with each other. The works also suggest that Korea was regarded as one of the more "civilised" nations by British estimation, perhaps even a potential trading partner which would imply British interest in Korea as one primarily inspired by trade prospects. Such early travel accounts were popular at the time and can be credited with providing preliminary observations regarding foreign people, governments, and even cultural "standards," which were then used for planning future expeditions and trade tactics. This article pursues an analytical approach to the primary sources, focusing on the implications of their content and rhetorical operations in connection with British attitudes toward Joseon Korea prior to the emergence and rise of the "Great British Empire."

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1. This work was supported by the Korea Research Foundation Grant funded by the Korean Government (MOEHRD) (KRF-2005-042-A00075).

Keywords: Travel literature, voyage and discovery, cultural exchange (early modern period), British expeditions (East Asia-HMS *Providence*, *Alceste*, and *Lyra*), Joseon contact with Europe

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## Introduction

This study investigates British perceptions of Joseon Korea in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century by examining travel literature by British authors, including John Green's *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1745-47), William Robert Broughton's *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean* (printed in 1804), Basil Hall's *Account of a Voyage of Discovery to the West Coast of Corea, and the Great Loo-Choo Island* (1818), and John M'Leod's *Narrative of a Voyage in His Majesty's Late Ship Alceste, to the Yellow Sea, Along the Coast of Corea* (1817). While the study focuses on the primary sources and the implications of their content regarding British attitudes toward Joseon Korea prior to the emergence and rise of the "Great British Empire," it will also contemplate the significance of the British views on Korea in light of the broader historical context of Britain at the time.

While there are a number of European accounts on China and Japan during and before this time period, those on Korea are relatively few. Some of the earliest extant materials include records by the Dutch navigator Hendrik Hamel (fl. 1653-69) and French Jesuit priests based in China, including Jean-Baptiste Regis (1663?-1738) and Jean-Baptiste du Halde (1674-1743). In terms of British accounts, however, it was not until the late eighteenth / early nineteenth century when travel reports on Korea began to appear, usually as a chapter or two within larger bodies of work on East Asia and the surrounding regions. By the late nineteenth century, there were an increasing number of published manuscripts that dealt exclusively with Korea.<sup>2</sup> At the turn of the nineteenth century, the industrial revolution was in its early stages, and it was before the British Empire would emerge on a global scale. The period was also marked by the Napoleonic Wars and a measured but growing ecological and demographic crisis in north-

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2. Works published in the late nineteenth century include John Ross (1879), William Elliot Griffis (1882), A. H. Savage-Landor (1895), and Isabella L. Bird (1898). There are also shorter, more localised narratives such as Charles William Campbell (1891) and A. E. J. Cavendish (1894).

western Europe. Foreign trade was considered one of the ways in which to resolve these problems and a means to procure economic stability and power; and countries such as China and Japan were regarded favourably for their technological and economic achievements as noted by European merchants and missionaries who visited the region prior to the nineteenth century (Markley 2006: 12-3).<sup>3</sup> In the words of Josiah Child, the director of the East India Company in the seventeenth century, “Foreign Trade produceth Riches, Riches Power, Power preserves our Trade and Religion; they mutually work one upon and for the preservation of each other” (Child 1681: 29).<sup>4</sup> As Robert Markley states in response to this statement, “Child assumes that trade can be both mutually beneficial for all (civilized) parties concerned and yet always work to the economic advantage of England.”<sup>5</sup> Child’s assumptions proved not to be necessarily the case, but his postulates were to be the basis of the ideology of trade that continued to dominate eighteenth and nineteenth century British society, which sought trading opportunities and commercial relations overseas.<sup>6</sup> In seeking new trade partners, new territories were to be explored; and in the process, in line with a tradition kept by their predecessors, navigators would map and chart little known regions and their seas, and document as much detail pertaining to the land, people, and their customs for the benefit of both the state and private audience who relished these works for their presentation of “exotic” worlds. As a result, travel literature increasingly came in great demand, and by the nineteenth century it served as archival record, entertaining narrative, and inspiring literature that promoted pride in the extensive economic empire which Britain was beginning to develop.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to these functions, however, while purporting to be a discursive mode that portrayed Europe and Britain as cultivated and influential in contrast

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3. For studies related to the socio-economic situation of Europe in relation to East Asia during this time, see Kenneth Pomeranz (2000). See also Alfred W. Crosby (1986) and Jack Goldstone (1991).

4. Reference found in Markley (2006: 4).

5. To this he adds the following statement regarding East Asia: “This rhetoric of mutual enrichment dominates European defenses of trade in the seventeenth century and underlies the promise that the lands of East Asia hold as both producers of desirable commodities and insatiable consumers of English goods, especially textiles.” See Markley (2006: 5).

6. For further historical and theoretical critique of assumptions, values, and interpretations of Eurocentric views on trade and modernity based on readings of fictional and non-fictional literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Markley (2006).

7. For studies on travel literature, see Percy (1983).

to other “uncivilised” worlds, British travel literature also inadvertently challenged ideological constructions that were essentially Euro- or Anglo-centric and this holds infallibly true for works recounting the experience of British explorers in East Asia.<sup>8</sup> Despite the small number of materials composed or compiled by Britons on Joseon Korea prior to the late nineteenth century, those that exist provide valuable clues as to how Korea and Koreans may have been perceived and understood by the British at a time when the two countries had very little contact with and limited knowledge of each another.

### **John Green’s *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1745-47)**

Even before her first expedition to China and Korea in the late eighteenth century, Britain’s interest in the region was documented in the form of an extensive compilation of surviving travel records, *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels*. Compiled by John Green (d. 1757) and published 50 years prior to the first British mission to China, the collection includes diverse accounts related to numerous countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. The sections on Korea are found in Chapters One and Two of Book Two in Volume Four and are English translations of earlier travel accounts by Jean-Bapiste Regis and Hendrik Hamel. While the collection does not include new or original reports on Korea, the compiler’s notes in the general preface and introduction to the accounts shed some light on a Briton’s attitude toward Korea at the time.

In the Preface, Green confirms that the only accounts available to the British and European public in his time were those composed by the French Jesuit missionaries who surveyed China (Regis and du Halde) and a Dutch traveller (Hamel). He remarks, “From this Country so much resembling *China*, as well in its Improvements as the Manners and Customs of the Natives, we pass into its Reverse in those Respects, Great Tartary” (Green 1745-47: v.). His statement here not only expresses a general observation, but also carries certain implications regarding established conceptions of “civility” or “sophistication.” How one culture defines these notions can differ from others, and in this early modern

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8. For related studies on travel narratives in the context of “Orientalism,” see Lisa Lowe’s *Critical Terrains* (1991), in particular Chapter Two (pp. 30-74).

period when different civilisations encountered one another for the first time, the way in which one culture judged another was ultimately based on systems determined and designated as normative by their own traditions. In Green's statement, China is the pinnacle prototype and paradigm of its region on which to compare and evaluate other surrounding nations; if a culture shares similarities with China, then it is "improved" or developed in its manners and customs (Korea), and if it does not, it is "reversed" or backwards (Siberian Tartary). Adding to this, in his Introduction to Regis's account, Green makes clear the different status between Korea and Tartary in relation to China; with Korea as "only a Kingdom tributary to *China*" while Tartary being "immediately subject to the *Chinese* Empire" (Green 1745-47: 319).

Although Korea is often identified in relation to China, it is noted that Green also distinguishes Korea's historical and cultural identity from that of China in his notes to Regis and Hamel's records. In reference to Regis's statement in the main text, "The *Koreans* were subject to the *Chinese* from the Time of *Yau*," Green comments,

This History, taken from the *Chinese* Annals, is not a connected Relation of the Affairs and Kings of *Korea*, but only so far as they concern the Empire of *China*: Yet, being the only Piece of the Kind extant, we judged it too important to be omitted. (Green 1745-47: 322, note e)

By drawing attention to this fact, Green's note not only suggests that the information provided by Regis regarding Korea's subordinate status since earlier times may be partial, hence misleading, but it also honours and differentiates Korean identity as one that is separate from the Chinese. Another example is found in his Introduction to Hamel's memoir in Chapter Two:

...with regard to the Customs of the People (which, as well as the Form of Government, seems to be nearly the same with the *Chinese*) there seems to lie an Objection against the Geography of the *Dutch* Author, viz. that it does not correspond with the Map of *Korea*, as to the Names of any of the Cities in the Road, which the *Dutchmen* took from the Sea-Coast to the Capital of that Kingdom, or even that of the Capital itself: Especially since that Map was taken from one hung-up in the King's Palace, and gives the indigenous Names to Places, unless the Names be written by the Missioners, according to the *Chinese*, instead of the *Korean*

Language: For though both Nations use the same Characters, their Languages are different. (Green 1745-47: 329-30)

While Green maintains, at the beginning of this passage, that the people's customs and governing system of Korea are congruent to those of China, he also acknowledges cultural distinctions, namely language, between the two countries, highlighting the Korean language as being emphatically different from Chinese.

In summary, through its preface and relevant introductions *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels* conveys by and large three matters related to Korea: the compiler corroborates that the only surviving European travel accounts on Korea to date were those written by Hamel and the French missionaries; for the compiler as well as editors and authors of the original accounts, China served as a leading model to understand and weigh up other countries in the region including Korea; while Korea was recognised as a tributary state to China, her historical and cultural identity was regarded as being separate and distinct. The first point effectively confirms that up to the mid-eighteenth century British navigators had not yet reached and explored Korea.<sup>9</sup> The last two points indicate a perception of Korea that is at once affected and obscured by discerned images of her more powerful neighbour, but which also credits her as a unique cultural entity that has yet to be discovered first hand.

### **William Robert Broughton's *A Voyage of Discovery* (printed in 1804)**

Around fifty years after the publication of Green's compilation, the first British expedition to China took place, known as the Macartney Mission of 1792-94. This mission, however, failed in its aim to open the Chinese Empire and form trade relations (Cranmer-Byng 1962, 1957/1958: 117-87; Alain Peyrefitte 1993, 1989c). Although the Britons had no explicit intention of making contact with

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9. Adding to this, Green also speculates that Europeans had yet to experience travelling around Korea first hand: "The Jesuit was not in *Korea* himself, he only traversed the Northern Borders, extending from Sea to Sea; the other three Sides being surrounded by Water. By this Survey the Notion, which long obtained, that *Korea* was an Island, is found to be an Error. The Author of the Memoirs had his Informations for the Inland Parts from a *Tartar* Lord, who was sent as Envoy from *Kang-hi*, to the King of *Korea*, but was too much confined to make many considerable Remarks." (Green 1745-47: 319)

Korea during this visit, subsequent expeditions to China after Macartney's unsuccessful venture raised possibilities for British contact with Korea, and heightened British interest in surveying the Korean coast. This interest gave way to the first British navigators to arrive on Korean territory in 1797 followed by a second tour in 1816.<sup>10</sup> The first British ship to reach Korea in 1797 was the HMS *Providence* under the command of Captain William Robert Broughton (1762-1821) who documented his journey and experiences, which was published in 1804 as *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*.<sup>11</sup> The opening of his Preface alludes to Broughton's firm belief in overseas trade and patriotism, which were likely to have been shared by his British compatriots, and the desire to further explore and expand new exchange relations with as many countries as possible including Korea:

Voyages of Discovery justly claim the public attention, because they open new sources of knowledge and trade, and consequently are interesting to a scientific and commercial people....

Highly pre-eminent in the scale of Europe, not only for her military character but for her celebrity also in the arts of peace, Great Britain has long maintained her envied superiority among the nations, from the encouragement she has given to such enterprizes, and for the many illustrious navigators she has produced. ...the survey of this unknown part of the North Pacific Ocean was particularly recommended by the Honourable Daines Barrington in his *Miscellanies*, where he says, "The coast of Corea, the northern part of Japan, and Lieuchieux Islands, should be explored." (Broughton 1804: iii-iv)

Broughton and his fellow naval officers were entrusted with the task of, among other things, exploring and charting the coasts of Northeast Asia and the North Pacific. An initial attempt at surveying the Korean coast after their departure from China was unsuccessful, which is documented in a short, uneventful account in Chapter Two of Book Two. But after their journey around the Japanese islands

10. Based on G. N. Curzon's *Problems of the Far East* (London, 1896), A. H. Hamilton also suggests that the earliest British interest in Korea was expressed in the seventeenth century, accompanying the first East India Company factory in Japan. See Hamilton (1974: 5-33).

11. For further information on Broughton and his four-year voyage aboard the HMS *Providence*, see James E. Hoare (2000: 303-12).

they began their second attempt to explore the east coast of the Korean peninsula from 6 October. On the 14<sup>th</sup> they docked near the harbour of “Tchosan” or “Chosan,”<sup>12</sup> to remain there for one week before heading south toward Macau.

Broughton and his crew were unable to spend much time around the Korean coast and had little contact with the local people owing to the Koreans’ expressed desire and anxiousness for their speedy departure. They remained long enough to obtain basic provisions and to venture briefly around the surrounding villages. The Britons’ experiences and brief sojourn in October 1797 on the southern shores of Joseon are recorded in Chapter Seven of Book Two. Further to earlier comments regarding tendencies to compare and evaluate Korea in relation to China, Broughton is also inclined to this approach in his narrative. He notes that the “the features and complexions of these [Korean] people resembled the Chinese, particularly their small eyes,” and in observing the boats he remarks, “they were similar in figure, though inferior in workmanship, to the Chinese boats” (Broughton 1804: 330-1).<sup>13</sup> Most of the British crew’s interactions with the local people involve the Koreans pleading them not to proceed any further inland but to return to sea and from whence they came. The Britons do, however, engage more with the local Korean officials who keep constant watch,<sup>14</sup> maintain the crowd of villagers, and assist their foreign visitors in obtaining water and wood to ensure that they leave Korea as quickly as possible. If the villagers are described as being “extremely ordinary,” Broughton portrays the officials, with whom he had more interaction, in more detail describing them as being physically nimble, effectual in carrying out tasks, and both “affable and

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12. Hoare suggests that Broughton “confused the name of the country, Choson, with that of the harbour” (Hoare 2000: 309). Both he and James H. Grayson render the location to be the Busan area. See Hoare (2000: 309) and Grayson (2005: 2).

13. In Broughton’s case, however, it seems China simply acts as a neutral point of reference like other countries in the region with which he had some contact prior to his visit to Korea. For example, he also makes reference to Japan when describing the land around the area where he and his men stayed during their brief sojourn in Korea: “The lands were cultivated in the Japanese manner, rising in ridges above each other between the hills, which gave them an opportunity of easily conducting water to the rice grounds” (Broughton 1804: 342).

14. “We landed opposite the schooner, to observe the latitude; and instantly we had a military guard from the village, who attended to our motions till we returned on board” (Broughton 1804: 337). The Korean officials being constantly on guard echoes an earlier testimony of the Tartar Lord who informed Jean-Baptiste Regis that “he was under no less Restraint himself in *Korea*, and that he was continually watched by those who instantly conveyed to Court every Word he spoke, by Means of Boys placed conveniently along the Streets” (Green 1745-47: 319).

conversable” toward their visitors (Broughton 1804: 336-7). But due to the consistent plea on the part of the Koreans, Broughton and his men soon leave the Korean shores “to the great joy of our Corean friends,” parting with “mutual satisfaction” (Broughton 1804: 341).

Rather than displaying offence and making dismissive remarks about the Koreans’ unwelcome reception that disallowed the British navigators from fully realising their objectives to explore the land and acquire information of any significance, Broughton notes, “We felt ourselves much obliged by their supplies of wood and water, without expecting any thing in return” (Broughton 1804: 341). His compliant attitude is accounted for implicitly in his ruminations that follow the main narrative:

It will be observed how little opportunity we had to make any remarks upon the customs and manners of these people, from their avoiding as much as possible any intercourse with us. Indeed this treatment we have been universally accustomed to, both at the land of Infoo and the Lieuchieux islands. (Broughton 1804: 342)

In other words, based on previous experiences, he was already aware of and is susceptible to local reactions to the unexpected presence of foreigners on their land. Hence, instead of a defensive rhetoric criticising the Koreans, on the whole Broughton employs a neutral, almost sympathetic tone in his reflections:

It appears by their behaviour they are by no means desirous of cultivating any intercourse whatever with strangers. They seemed to look upon us with great indifference, which I suppose was owing to the insignificance of our vessel; or perhaps, their not comprehending what nation we belonged to, or what our pursuits were, made them solicitous for our departure, probably from a suspicion of our being pirates; or some other reason we could not divine. (Broughton 1804: 342)

However, soon thereafter there is an instance when he betrays some level of umbrage and superciliousness toward the Koreans and their reticence:

Amongst the pines were other diciderous trees, but of what kinds we were unacquainted, as the jealousy of the people entirely prevented our acquiring any knowledge of the productions of the country. Indeed in no

instance would they admit our researches. (Broughton 1804: 342)

It is the usage of the word, “jealousy,” which displays a shift in tone, but this shift is momentary as he continues with his deliberations in the same balanced and level manner with which his previous comments were made. While one of the main tasks of Broughton’s crew was to chart the Korean coasts, his observations of resources and articles spotted on the land<sup>15</sup> and the Korean people’s reactions to his men’s attire and presence<sup>16</sup> clearly indicate the underlying mission and objective of their journey: to investigate possibilities of British trade with Joseon Korea. This is made all the more explicit in Broughton’s final introspective remarks based on his experience on the Korean shores before continuing with his journey:

As a commercial nation, of course they were well acquainted and conversant in trade; but with us they did not seem desirous of making any exchanges whatever, which may be owing, probably, to the articles we possessed being of no value in their estimation. Indeed we had nothing to excite their attention, or satisfy their curiosity, except our wearing apparel.<sup>17</sup> (Broughton 1804: 343-4)

### **Basil Hall’s *Account of a Voyage of Discovery* (1818) and John M’Leod’s *Narrative of a Voyage* (1817)**

While Broughton was among the first British crew to have landed on Korean

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15. “We saw horses, hogs, poultry, and black cattle, of which articles much as we were in want we could not procure. Money, at least of European coins, they had no idea of; but they perfectly understood the value of gold and silver, their knives, their knives, &c. being ornamented in the workmanship with those metals” (Broughton 1804: 343).

16. “They were well acquainted with guns and firearms, but we saw no appearance of offensive weapons amongst them, nor did they seem any way apprehensive of the small force we possessed. All their attention was paid to expedite our departure; and yet many articles of European manufacture excited their curiosity, particularly our woollen clothing” (Broughton 1804: 343).

17. It should be noted that there is also a Korean account of Broughton’s visit in the *Joseon wangjo sillok* (Annals of the Joseon Dynasty). The entry is found under the twentieth year of King Jeongjo (47:41). Courtesy of Henny Savenije, an English translation of the entry has been published online at <http://www.british.henny-savenije.pe.kr/koreanpage.htm>. See Appendix I.

shores and had some (albeit limited) contact with Koreans, his travel account did not prove to be as popular or influential as the works by successive explorers.<sup>18</sup> With the Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812, the pressure for overseas trade expansion became even greater for Britain in the early nineteenth century, competing with her European neighbours as well as the United States. Although Britain's interest in commercial relations with East Asia was due in part to a desire to block the expansion of Tsarist Russia, it was also the desire to open trade with China and Japan, who were some of the most coveted trade partners.<sup>19</sup> Basil Hall (1788-1844) sailed to East Asia as a lieutenant of the Royal Navy on board the *Lyra*, as part of the Amherst Mission to China, after which he was promoted to the rank of captain. His work, *Account of a Voyage*, recounts the voyage of two British ships, the *Alceste* and the *Lyra*, along the west coast of Joseon Korea in 1816. Hall's account was well received by his compatriots upon its publication in 1818 in London, and his work was translated into Dutch, German, and Italian in subsequent years. It is believed that an unauthorised edition published in Philadelphia the same year of its publication in Britain was the "first book published in the United States which referred directly to Korea" (Library of Congress 1950).<sup>20</sup> Along with Basil Hall's account, John M'Leod, a surgeon on board the *Alceste*, also produced a book based on his journey. His *Narrative of a Voyage* is a corresponding work to Basil Hall's. A third edition of the book was published in 1819 entitled, *Voyage of His Majesty's Ship Alceste to China, Corea, and the Islands of Lewchew, with an Account of her Shipwreck*.<sup>21</sup>

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18. Grayson conjectures, "This lack of influence may be attributed to the time when the book was published, in the middle of the Napoleonic war years when British attention would have been focussed on military and political events in continental Europe and not on commercial and hydrological interests in distant parts of the world" (Grayson 2005: 2-3). While this may have been the case, it should also be considered that the lack of details and information pertaining to the manners, customs as well as the contemporary political situation and intentions of the Korean people could not have served to form British opinion and views regarding Joseon Korea in any significant way. Thus, the sparsity of information would not have yielded the work to have any major impact on Anglo-Korean relations. However, it can be estimated that the event of Broughton's journey and record did serve as an incentive for future navigators to attempt a journey to Korea and, the local people permitting, to further explore the country and document their experiences in as much detail as possible. This is alluded to in Hall's acknowledgement of Broughton's work in the Preface to *Account of a Voyage of Discovery*.

19. For further details on circumstances and events surrounding the voyage of the *Alceste* and *Lyra*, see Shannon McCune's "Introduction" to the Tuttle edition of *The Voyage of the Alceste* (McCune 1963: xi-xxviii).

20. Reference found in Shannon McCune (1975: 1-19), 6.

Hall and M'Leod's accounts of their voyage were collectively praised in a book review published in *The Edinburgh Review* in 1818 (*Edinburgh Review* 1818: 475-97). What is interesting to note are the concluding remarks of this review:

We do not know when we have met with two more pleasing works... They make us proud of our country, and put us in good humour with our species. They contain a great deal of curious information, too; but it is their moral interest that forms by far their greatest attraction.<sup>22</sup> (*Edinburgh Review* 1818: 497)

These remarks reverberate with the patriotic pride conveyed in Broughton's Preface, and further substantiate the burgeoning popularity and assumed role of travel literature as mentioned earlier. But what is particularly interesting is the last statement, "it is their *moral* interest that forms by far their greatest attraction," which alludes to a British society that was becoming increasingly conscientious of developing notions of "civility" and "propriety" in line with its socio-economic expansion at home and abroad. The statement is rather curious in that what "(the works') moral interest" signifies is not entirely clear. At first glance, it seems to refer to the authors' interest in and estimation of the state of morals of the Korean people, which would imply a rhetorical tone of authority and disparagement in their narratives. But if we examine their accounts, it can be suggested that Hall and M'Leod did not merely impose one-sided conceptions of propriety with British values as the pinnacle paradigm, but also considered the characteristics of Korean values and rules of decorum as one of many edifying models to convey to their fellow Britons.

Hall and his embassy's visit to Korea is recounted in Chapter One in colourful

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21. Details related to Hall and his life can be found in McCune, *Account*, 2-6 and in Grayson. For further biographical information on M'Leod, see McCune, *Voyage* and Grayson (2005: 4-5).

22. Reference also found in McCune (1975: 6).

As McCune notes, British interest in the Koreans was matched by Korean interest in the British visitors-Hall and his crew's visit, like Broughton's stopover, is documented in the *Joseon wangjo sillok* under the sixteenth year of King Sunjo (48:101), the record of which has been translated into English by L. George Paik. Paik's translation can be found in "The Korean Record on Captain Basil Hall's Voyages of Discovery to the West Coast of Korea" (*Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch* Vol. 24 [1935]: 15-19). Reference to this is found in McCune (1975: 8). For the Korean entry, see Appendix II.

detail, and compared to those of Broughton and M'Leod, Hall's narrative is richly descriptive and attentive to episodic details. Shortly upon their first arrival on Korean territory on an island situated off the western coast,<sup>23</sup> Hall and his crew, as experienced by Broughton and his men two decades earlier, are met with an unwelcome reception by the local people—this sentiment, as Hall and his crew would discover, would prevail and be the consistent element of their experience throughout their time on Korean land. Hall's descriptions of the local people are mixed with physical observations and personal opinions that are initially coloured by an air of condescension, but which gradually convey deference especially with the occasion of his crew's encounter with an old Korean "Chief"<sup>24</sup> on their third stopover. In describing the first Korean group they meet he writes, "their colour was a deep copper, and their appearance forbidding, and somewhat savage" (Hall 1818: 3), and regarding their airs and manners he states,

These people have a proud sort of carriage, with an air of composure and indifference about them, and an absence of curiosity which struck us as being very remarkable. Sometimes when we succeeded, by dint of signs and drawings, in expressing the nature of a question, they treated it with derision and insolence.<sup>25</sup> (Hall 1818: 6)

After having failed in their attempts to "conciliate them" with "forbearance," the British crew are unable to explore the area in any great detail and proceed with their journey. When they land on another Korean island not far from the first, they

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23. Grayson specifies the location to be Maryang-jin off Seocheon County in South Chungcheong Province (Grayson 2005: 1).

24. The entry in the *Joseon wangjo sillok* identifies the Korean "Chief" as Jo Daebok (趙大福), the head of the Maryangjin coastal guard (該鎮僉使), and his "secretary" as Yi Seungnyeol (李升烈), a local officer of the Piin magistracy (庇仁縣監). See Appendix II. Since this study examines *British* perceptions of Joseon Korea, Jo Daebok is referred to as "the Korean Chief" throughout the main discussion of this article as his identity remained unknown to Hall and his crew.

25. He goes on to recount a specific incident to further illustrate the people's "impertinence": "On one occasion, being anxious to buy a clumsy sort of rake made of reeds, which appeared to me curious, I succeeded in explaining my wish to the owner, one of the lowest class of villagers; he laughed at first good humouredly, but immediately afterwards seized the rake which was in my hand, and gave it a rude push towards me with a disdainful fling of the arm, accompanying this gesticulation by words, which seemed to imply a desire to give any thing upon condition of our going away" (Hall 1818: 7).

encounter local villagers who are equally anxious as the first group to see the foreigners leave their land. Of this second group of Koreans Hall remarks, “their beards and whiskers which, apparently, had never been cut, and their fans and long tobacco-pipes, and their strange language and manners, gave a grotesque air to the whole group, which it is impossible to describe” (Hall 1818: 11). The Britons stay only one day on this island before setting off, to the relief and joy of the locals who eagerly help Hall’s boat to set out toward the British ship on the sea, when Hall has occasion to observe their movement at close range.

This gave us an opportunity of observing their remarkable symmetry and firmness of limb; yet, as their long hair was allowed to flow about their neck and shoulders, their appearance was truly savage. [...] The people, upon the whole, are more free, and not so surly as our acquaintance on Sir James Hall’s group [i.e., the first group]. They have a singular custom of speaking with a loud tone, amounting almost to a shout. (Hall 1818: 12)

It is clear from his narrative recounting the crew’s first two landings that Hall is initially prone or predisposed to an attitude of patronage as he encounters and observes the natives. Although his mode of description is concise and seemingly objective, his choice of words (“savage,” “forbidding,” “grotesque”) discloses partial judgment.

It is the British crew’s third stopover that is the most significant in terms of Hall’s interaction with Korean people and first-hand observations on some examples of Korean manners and customs. Their experience on this particular shore is especially marked by their dealings with the Korean Chief. Their first contact begins with the following episode in which both parties try to communicate with one another but to no avail:

[The Korean Chief] sat down on his mat, and began talking with great gravity and composure, without appearing in the smallest degree sensible that we did not understand a single word that he said. We of course could not think of interrupting him, and allowed him to talk on at his leisure; but when his discourse was concluded, he paused for our reply, which we made with equal gravity in English; upon this he betrayed great impatience at his harangue having been lost upon us, and supposing we could, at all events, read, he called to his secretary, and began to dictate a letter. (Hall 1818: 16)

Having already discovered that even their Chinese assistant could understand neither the Korean spoken language nor the Chinese writing composed by the Koreans in their previous encounters with the natives, Hall and his men are prepared for a reaction of surprise by the Korean Chief. However, what they are met with is more than mere wonderment, as Hall describes “his mortification and disappointment were extreme on perceiving that he overrated our acquirements,” to which he attaches the following note:

The knowledge of writing is supposed to be very generally diffused over the countries using what is called the Chinese character, and, as probably none but the lowest vulgar are ignorant of it,<sup>26</sup> the surprise of these people on discovering our inability to read their papers is very natural. The case, we may imagine, had never occurred to them before, and it was highly interesting to watch the effect which so novel an incident produced. At first they appeared to doubt the fact of our ignorance, and showed some symptoms of impatience; but this opinion did not last long, and they remained completely puzzled, looking at each other with an odd expression of surprise. (Hall 1818: 18)

While the two parties are unable to communicate their respective situations in great detail, through body language and signs they sustain a certain level of basic understanding and relationship. This was most likely made possible due to the presence and participation of a senior member of the local community, which was not the case in the first two stopovers. Although this allowed Hall and his crew to interact with a select group of people over a lengthier period than on previous occasions, their contact with the locals at large was very limited as before.

The Chief is invited to visit the British ships, and during his calls with his associates Hall takes great attention to describe him, noting everything from his attire, appearance, and movements, to his “grave propriety,” “ceremonial etiquette,” “keen observation and curiosity,” and “willingness to adopt his guests’ customs” as a matter of courtesy.<sup>27</sup> As his descriptions suggest, Hall is very much taken in by the Chief’s mannerisms, and his rhetoric is marked by respect

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26. This is echoed by M’Leod as he writes, “The Chinese written characters have found their way here, but they would appear to be confined to the literati, for the common language has no resemblance in sound to the colloquial language of China” (M’Leod 1817: 53).

27. These descriptions are found intermittently in Hall (1818: 30-4).

and admiration in contrast to his previous narratives relating the natives of the Korean islands. Further to earlier comments regarding rhetorical tone and its implication, if Hall's descriptions of Koreans during the first two landings were characterised by derision and disparagement, based on the ways in which he describes the Chief, he represents a model of civility that is at once intrinsic and culture-specific, at the same time extrinsic and universal:

The politeness and ease with which he accommodated himself to the habits of people so different from himself, were truly admirable; and when it is considered, that hitherto, in all probability, he was ignorant even of our existence, his propriety of manners should seem to point, not only to high rank in society, but to imply also a degree of civilization in that society, not confirmed by other circumstances. Be this as it may, the incident is curious, as showing, that however different the state of society may be in different countries, the forms of politeness are much alike in all. This polished character was very well sustained by the old Chief; as he was pleased with our attempts to oblige him, and whatever we seemed to care about, he immediately took an interest in. He was very inquisitive, and was always highly gratified when he discovered the use of any thing which had puzzled him at first. But there was no idle surprise, no extravagant bursts of admiration, and he certainly would be considered a man of good breeding, and keen observation, in any part of the world. (Hall 1818: 34)<sup>28</sup>

In other words, Hall's experience with the Chief seems to rub out any former misgivings he may have had regarding Koreans and the extent of their social propriety from his contact with the natives of the first two islands. At the same time, the above narrative indicates an author who is conscious of social class and correlates it with the distinction of manners—"propriety of manners" is not merely a matter related to national or cultural identity, but is also deeply rooted in how social behaviour and rules are defined, standardised, and practised among the upper echelon of an organised community regardless of nationality.

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28. To this Hall also adds, "Towards his own people, indeed, he was harsh and impatient at all times; but this may have arisen from his anxiety that no offence should be given us by the other natives, whom he might know were less delicate and considerate than himself, and therefore required constant control" (Hall 1818: 34-5).

When the Chief, after having been received by the British men onboard their ships, does not return the hospitality by failing to welcome the foreigners into his village, the two parties make their individual cases using body language as before. However, in this instance, their communication through signs fails and the Korean Chief displays a sudden change of behaviour reflecting profound grief and despair that results in a scene where he breaks out in heavy tears. When attempts to use signs in show acting to deliver their thoughts are unsuccessful, Hall remarks:

The signs used by different nations, however, are often dissimilar when the same thing is to be expressed: and it happened frequently with us that all attempts at explanation failed, on both sides, though the signs used appeared to be understood by all the people of the same nation with the person making the signs. (Hall 1818: 38)

Hall does not expect the Koreans to understand the signs used by him and his men, as they cannot equally construe those used by the Koreans. This passage presents an attitude that is not judgmental toward the Koreans for their failure to comprehend the gesticulations made by the British, but rather that of a neutral stance and even sympathetic in implication. But as the Chief's change in composure and behaviour are in stark contrast to his earlier mannerisms that had profoundly impressed Hall, the author tries to make sense of the situation by reflecting on the external factors that may have given cause to the Chief's distress, rather than questioning or scrutinising over his character.

It seems very probable that some general instructions were in force along the whole of this coast by which the treatment of strangers is regulated. The promptitude with which we were met at this place, where, perhaps, no ship ever was before, and the pertinacity with which our landing was opposed, seem to imply an extraordinary degree of vigilance and jealousy on the part of the government. (Hall 1818: 38)

Here, the underlying culprit causing the scene of the Chief's distress is not identified as the Chief himself, but rather the Korean government for their "extraordinary degree of vigilance and jealousy" for which they are implicitly criticised. So while Hall's final reflections on their sojourn on that shore includes a frank statement expressing a certain loss of respect for the Chief on account of his "pitiable

and childish distress,” he also adds, “every thing ridiculous in the old man’s character is lost in the painful uncertainty which hangs over his fate” (Hall 1818: 41), expressing sympathy and some level of understanding regarding his odd outburst that was essentially caused by extrinsic, not intrinsic, elements.

After their departure, Hall’s embassy travel toward the southwest steering through the numerous islands along the region. On the second day since their departure, encountering rapid tides they anchor near a village on an island which they set out to explore the following day. Here, as on other Korean shores, the British crew are met with locals who desire their immediate departure. However, they manage to venture inland, discovering and examining a deserted house, before returning to face the anxious locals.

The quick manner of these people, so different from the ordinary behaviour of the Coreans we had seen, made us apprehend that some violence was meditated; but in this we were mistaken, for they sat down with us, gave us their pipes to smoke, and laughed immoderately at some of our words: we took the hint from them, and laughed heartily whenever we observed that any thing good had been said amongst them; this was well received, and proved afterwards a good mode of instruction. (Hall 1818: 48-9)

This is the first instance in which the writer’s receptivity to advantageous modes of behaviour, which had been alluded to in preceding narratives, is explicitly expressed. In other words, if British reactions to the Koreans’ behaviour were a dominant feature in much of his narrative hitherto, Hall begins henceforth to explicate gestures and approaches that invite positive responses from the Koreans, and which thus might assist future British encounters and interaction with Koreans.<sup>29</sup> This is further reviewed toward the end of his account on Korea as they leave the coast on 10 September:

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29. A good example is found on page 55, where Hall expounds on how the British sailors were much better at making acquaintance with and winning the confidence of the natives than the officers: “This seems the natural effect of the difference in our manners. On meeting with natives, we feel so anxious to conciliate, and to avoid giving offence, that our behaviour, thus guarded and circumspect, has an air of restraint about it, which may produce distrust and apprehension on their part; whilst, on the other hand, Jack [a sailor], who is not only unreflecting and inoffensive himself, but never suspects that others can possibly misconstrue his perfect good-will and unaffected frankness, has an easy, disengaged manner, which at once invites confidence and familiarity.”

The shortness of our stay on this coast, and the difficulty we experienced in communicating with the inhabitants, will account for the scanty and disjointed nature of the information obtained. A future voyage would do well to be accompanied by a person who can write the Chinese character, and should have full leisure to overcome, by patient management, the distrust of strangers evinced by the unsociable people. (Hall 1818: 56-7)

As Shannon McCune notes, while Basil Hall's book was more widely disseminated than M'Leod's, it is limited in scope, dealing exclusively with the journey to Korea and the Ryukyu islands, when compared to M'Leod's work which provides a more extensive testimony of the entire journey from England via Brazil and Cape Town, to China, Korea, Okinawa, Java, and the return trip via St. Helena (McCune 1975: xiii). His account on Korea is more abbreviated in nature when compared to Hall's work, and his descriptions and reflections are concise in narrative style. Nevertheless, it is interesting to read and compare the two accounts, as they often convey a different focus in narrative that implies varying intentions, or alternative interpretations of events. For example, if we compare the two authors' narratives on an incident surrounding the Korean Chief's punishment of one of his men in full view of the British group, Hall includes remarks on the purported intention of the Chief's punishment, suggesting that the event was intended to display aspects of Korean decorum and "high notions of Corean discipline" to their foreign visitors:

After sitting about ten minutes, we left the Chief in great good humour, and returned on board, thinking, of course, that he would go straight to shore; but in this we were much mistaken, for we had no sooner left him, than he pushed off to the distance of ten or twelve yards, and calling the other boats round him, gave orders for inflicting the discipline of the bamboo upon the unfortunate culprit, who had been ordered into confinement during the conference. This exhibition, which it was evidently intended we should witness, had a very ludicrous effect, for it followed so much in train with the rest of the ceremony, and was carried on with so much gravity and order, that it looked like an essential part of the etiquette. During the infliction of this punishment, a profound silence was observed by all the party, except by five or six persons immediately about the delinquent, whose cries they accompanied by a sort of song or yell at each blow of the bamboo. This speedy execution of justice was, no

doubt, intended to impress us with high notions of Corean discipline.  
(Hall 1818: 21-2)

M'Leod, on the other hand, does not speculate on intentions, but rather focuses on the details of the event as it takes place and on pointed descriptions of the Chief's demeanour and attire with reference to Shakespeare's *King Lear* with an aim to, perhaps, provide a vivid and relatable picture in the minds of his British readers:

As he shoved off from the brig, one of his attendants, having in some way or other misbehaved, was by his order extended on the deck of the boat, and received, in a summary way, about a dozen and a half blows with a flat bamboo over the seat of honour; and, as the culprit squalled, a number of his companions standing round him joined in the howl, either in derision, or to drown his noise. This ceremony finished, a flourish of trumpets and other instruments announced his approach to the frigate. He was a man apparently about seventy years of age, of a very venerable and majestic mien; his hair and hoary whiteness. [...] Divested of his broad-brimmed hat, he would not upon the whole have made a bad representative of old *King Lear*.<sup>30</sup> (M'Leod 1817: 40)

In other cases, the two authors' narratives disclose different levels of understanding or interpretations of a situation. In the scene involving the Korean Chief's dramatic display of grief when the British crew insist on his allowing them to explore the village in return for their hospitality onboard their ship, Hall's account, while descriptively animated, indicates the author's lack of receptiveness regarding the gravity of the Chief's predicament and the serious consequences that would befall him if he were to concede to his visitors' request:

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30. In the following page, when M'Leod describes a scene of a meeting between the British officers and Korean men on the boat, we can see another similar attempt on the author's part to provide a picture to which his compatriots could relate: "It appearing to be etiquette for the head to be covered, the whole party, consisting of Captains Maxwell, Hall, and other officers, conformed to this rule, and squatting on the cabin-floor, with gold-laced cocked hats on, amid the strange costume of the Coreans, looked like a party of masquers." While this last statement ("party of masquers") would mean very little in the Korean cultural context, it would conjure up an image familiar in the minds of the British public which would serve as a proxy or point of reference as they imagine the scene.

The old man was lifted out of the boat by several of his people, and we were amazed to find, when they set him down, that he was in tears, and looking altogether very unhappy. [...] The Chief now began crying violently, and turning towards the village walked away, leaning his head on the shoulder of one of his people. As he went along, he not only sobbed and wept, but every now and then bellowed aloud. We had been nowise prepared for such a scene, and were extremely sorry for having pushed matters to this extremity. It had never occurred to us that the old Chief's head was really in danger; and even now we could not satisfy ourselves whether he was sincere, or merely acting in order to prevail on us to retire. (Hall 1818: 37)

In contrast, while concise in description M'Leod's account displays the author's prompt discernment of the situation based on the Chief's reaction.

The old chieftain hung his head, and clasped his hands in mournful silence; at last, bursting into a fit of crying, he was supported, sobbing all the way, to a little distance, where he sat down upon a stone, looking back at the officers with the most melancholy aspect. His feelings appeared to be those of a man who imagined some great calamity had befallen his country in the arrival of strange people; and that he as the unhappy being in whose government this misfortune had occurred. (M'Leod 1817: 44)

The differing levels of awareness between the two men are further exemplified in the scene following the Chief's outburst when the British men are offered some cockles and water on the beach by the Chief as a gesture to compensate for his inability to concede to their wishes. Hall writes, "We explained to him that the proper place to eat was in a house, and not on a wet dirty beach; he made no offer, however, of any other; but leaning his head pensively on his hands, seemed entirely resigned to his fate" (Hall 1818: 39). While he describes the Chief's motions and makes reference to "his fate," he does not interpret or reflect on the implied nature of them. M'Leod, on the other hand, provides a construed explanation of the Chief's signs and infers on the Korean's position and circumstances:

The old man, who had observed attentively, and seemed perfectly to

comprehend, the meaning of the signs, answered...as if to say, “What signifies your good dinners when I must lose my head?” [...] It was pretty evident, however, that he was acting from orders which he dared not trifle with, rather than from any inhospitable feeling in his own nature. (M’Leod 1817: 45-6)

While much else of M’Leod’s travel accounts overlaps in their details with those of Hall’s work, what is particularly noteworthy is his personal reflections which follow the main narrative toward the end of the section on Korea. After his Korean travel experiences M’Leod concludes, “Of their government, general manners, and customs, it would be impossible to speak with any accuracy from so limited an intercourse as we had with them” (M’Leod 1817: 51), then proceeds to speculate on Joseon Korea’s political situation in relation to China and based on the consistent signs of anguish displayed by the Korean people at the British crew’s uninvited presence on their land:

China has very little communication *with the barbarians of the west*, and that is chiefly confined to a particular spot, the port of Canton; Japan still less, and Corea none at all. A connexion, however, is kept up with China by two or three annual junks from the eastern coast.

[...]

Corea (or Kaoli) is tributary to the emperor of China, and sends him triennial Embassadors expressive of its homage. We saw enough, however, to convince us that the sovereign of this country governs with most absolute sway; and that, occasionally, he makes very free with the heads of his subjects. The allusion to this danger could not have been so constant and uniform, in places so remote from each other, without some strong reason.

The law against intercourse with foreigners appears to be enforced with the utmost rigour. ... On almost all occasions they positively refused every thing offered to them. His Corean majesty may well be styled “king of ten thousand isles,” but his *supposed* continental dominions have been very much circumscribed by our visit to his shores. Except in the late and present embassy, no ships had ever penetrated into the Yellow Sea; the *Lion* had kept the coast of China aboard only, and had neither touched at the Tartar nor Corean side. (M’Leod 1817: 51-2)

M'Leod's reflections, as well as Hall's accounts, convey and bear out the fact that Britain was not yet well-acquainted with Korea in the early nineteenth century, with China acting as a major point of reference for all matters, from government, politics, and culture, to the people, customs and manners.

## Conclusions

During the first two British expeditions to the Korean coasts, consistent motifs which Broughton, Hall and M'Leod encountered during their journeys were the Korean people's averse reaction to the unexpected sight of foreigners on their land, and their constant plea for their visitors' departure. In spite of this, the British navigators succeeded at spending some time on Korean shores and achieving some interaction with the locals, albeit limited in time and extent, which enabled them to record and put out the first and rather interesting first-hand British observations about Korea and Koreans for the benefit of their contemporaries as well as future British explorers and readers. As Markley notes, international trade for Britain increasingly began to be perceived as a means to transcend and displace contemporary anxieties about declining proceeds, increasing prices, and environmental degradation, whereby trade was to be promoted as the source of adjudicating the value of nation states (Markley 2006: 270). In relation to this, travel literature as a discursive practice established standards of cultural value in the context of dealing with foreign cultures or external differences. At the same time, as Lisa Lowe suggests, the trope of travel became a discursive means for a culture to cope with internal as well as external differences and changes. In Britain, internal trials were related to the economic and social expansion, which increasingly gave rise to religious dissent, parliamentary control, burgeoning industry, and a growing working class (Lowe 1991: 31).<sup>31</sup> Considering these perceived functions of travel discourses and the importance of trade for Britain at the time, British travel literature on Joseon Korea of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century represented the first official "guide" to this East Asian kingdom that was largely unfamiliar to the British public. The

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31. Lowe adds, "In the other words, the utopian geographic expansion implied by travel literature addressed national anxieties about maintaining hegemony in an age of rapidly changing boundaries and territories. Yet it also regulated the social quarrels besetting the old regimes of the period by transfiguring internal challenges to the social order into fantasies of external otherness."

accounts may be limited in scope and sparse in detail, but they were to have been greatly valued nevertheless by British travelers and merchants for providing vital clues regarding the people, government, and cultural “standards” for planning future expeditions and trade tactics.

From Broughton, Hall and M’Leod’s narratives, it can be said that British perceptions of Joseon Korea at this time were characterised by a people who, while displaying marks of discipline and the capacity to be polite, sociable, and generally of good behaviour, were firm in their wish not to interact or deal with foreigners outside of select or known regions, and a government who had strict control over their people who dared not defy orders from above. With regards to the level of propriety and civility on a cultural or national level, the British travel accounts on Joseon Korea do not, on the whole, convey the kingdom to be what the British may deem as “uncivilised” in spite of the Korean people’s unwelcome reception of the British explorers. Rather, in line with Green’s notion of civility as implied in his writings which postulate cultures similar to China as “improved” or developed, it appears that Joseon Korea was considered as one of the more “civilised” nations. As for her resources and capacity for commercial trade, there was much potential but Korea did not appear to be ready in spirit as of yet to consider direct trade relations with unknown strangers beyond familiar territory. Existing knowledge and records were scanty and insufficient, so there was still much effort and more visits to be made to gather further concrete information about the country.

In examining British travel literature whilst considering one of the inadvertent functions of these works at that time-to question established ideological constructions regarding foreign cultures-it can be concluded that, in spite of the Korean people’s reticence which disallowed the proud British explorers to become better acquainted with the local customs and people of what they considered a relatively obscure kingdom, the British writers’ rhetoric did not necessarily fall into one of patronising condescension or disparagement with notions of British values being a superior model; rather, it considered and respected Korean values as one of many instructive models to convey to their fellow British public. This does not mean to suggest, however, that the purpose of their conveying these matters stemmed purely out of altruistic or philanthropic concerns, or that they were free from mercenary motives. As Britain had yet to start making active attempts to open Korea to trade, British travel literature from these earlier times would have performed a practical role of educating future British voyagers and merchants on the Korean people’s ways to assist them in

the future establishment and promotion of mercantile relations with Korea.

## Appendix I

### *Joseon wangjo sillok*, entry relating the visit of Captain Broughton and his crew in 1797

正祖 47卷 21年 9月 6日 壬申 (Original source, Vol. 47, p. 41)

慶尙道觀察使李亨元馳啓：“異國船一隻，漂到東萊<sup>^</sup>龍塘浦前洋。船中五十人，皆編髮，或垂後，頭戴白氈笠，或籐結笠，形如我國戰笠。身披三升黑氈衣，形如我國挾袖，裹着單袴。其人皆鼻高眼碧。令譯學，問其國號及漂到緣由，則漢、清、倭、蒙之語，俱不曉解。授筆使書，則形如雲山圖畫，不可曉得。船長十八把，廣七把，左右下杉板，俱以銅鐵片鋪之，堅緻精完，點水不透云。”三道統制使尹得達馳啓：“東萊府使鄭尙愚呈稱：‘馳往龍塘浦，見漂人，則鼻高眼碧，似西洋人。且見其所載物貨，卽琉璃瓶、千里鏡、無孔銀錢，皆是西洋產也。言語聲音，一未曉解，惟浪加沙其四字，卽倭語長崎島也，似是商船之自長崎島，轉漂到此者。對我人以手指對馬島近處，以口吹噓，似是待風之意云。’”命依其願，候風發送。

English Translation of the Entry, courtesy of Henny Savenije  
(<http://www.british.henny-savenije.pe.kr/koreanpage.htm>)

On the day of *Imshin* (i.e., 6 September 1797), the Governor of Kyongsang Province, Lee Hyong-won, came running and reported the following in writing.

A strange ship from a country arrived off the Yong-dang-po Bay, Tongnae County. There were 50 people in the ship. All of them had hair tied or pulled back. They wore either hats made of thick white material on their heads or hats made of wisteria. The shape looked just like our warrior hat. They dressed themselves in thick black material, 3 *dae* long. The shape looked like Hyopsoo in Korea. They wore thin trousers. They were high-nosed and blue-eyed. They were asked to answer the name of their country and why they came to Korea after having drifted at sea. They neither knew nor understood any Chinese, Japanese, or Mongolian. We provided them with brushes to write and their writing resembled like mountains covered with clouds. Though pictures were drawn, we still could not understand. The ship was 18 Bal long (i.e. 30 meters) and 7 Bal

wide (i.e. 11 meters). Cedar wood was used for both the left and right planks of the ship which were all covered with copper plates again. They were firm, elaborate, exquisite and complete so that there was no leakage even in water.

The Admiral in charge of three provinces, Yoon Duk-kyu, came running and reported in writing.

Drifted people looked like westerners with high noses and blue eyes when I rushed to the Yong-dang-po Bay to see them after having been reported by the Tong-nae Magistrate, Jung Sang-woo. In addition, the cargoes in the ship were all western goods such as glass bottles, telescopes and silver holeless coins. We could not understand their language and pronunciation at all, but we could realise only a four-syllable word *Nang-ga-sa-gee* which referred to the island of Nagasaki in Japan. It seemed that this merchant ship arrived here after having drifted here and there from the island of Nagasaki. Looking at us, they pointed their hands to the vicinity of Tsushima motioning the wind by blowing with their mouths as if they were waiting for the right wind. Orders were given them and we had them sail after having waited for the wind to be in their favour.

## Appendix II

### *Joseon wangjo sillok*, entry relating the visit of Captain Hall and his crew in 1816

純祖 19卷 16年 7月 19日 丙寅 (Original source, Vol. 48, p. 101)

忠清水使李載弘狀啓以爲：

馬梁鎮葛串下，異樣船二隻漂到。該鎮僉使趙大福，地方官庇仁縣監李升烈聯報以爲，‘漂到異樣船隻，雖多費人力，多用船隻，莫可曳入。故十四日平明，僉使縣監，同往異樣小船所浮處，先以真書問之，以不知搖頭，更以諺文問之，又以不知揮手。如是詰難者移時，終不得問答，畢竟渠自執筆書之，而似篆非篆，似諺非諺，莫可通辨。其左右上下層閣間，無數書冊中，渠又拈出二卷，一卷給僉使，一卷給縣監。故開卷見之，則亦是非篆非諺，又莫能曉解，還爲授之，則固辭不受，納之袖中。冊子與受之際，有一真書葉紙，似是該國去來文字，故取之以來。人物則箇箇削髮，頭著則或以黑毛爲之，或以繩爲之，形如銅鑪臼。衣服則上衣或白三

升，或黑氈，右衽結單錘，下衣多着白三升，而如行纏狀，其製甚狹，僅容其膊。襪子則以白三升揮裹，履則以黑皮造之，狀如發莫，以纓納之。所持之物，或佩金銀環刀，或佩金銀粧刀，或佩乾靈龜。或持千里鏡。而其人名數，間間滿載，難以詳計，似近八九十名。又往其大船而問情，則人物服色所佩所持，一如小船，而以真以諺，俱以不知搖頭，名數比小船似可屢倍，船上房間，或坐或起，或往或來，極其紛錯，難以指的計數。而書冊器物，倍加於小船。毋論大小船，蓋其製樣，奇奇怪怪，層層間間，寶器與異物，其他鐵木等物名不知者，難以勝計。而其中又有女人。目下所見者，只爲一名，而白布裹頭，着紅色裳。兩船俱設冶所，鑄者皆大鐵丸箭鏃等物。僉使縣監下船之時，其中一漢，持一卷冊固授，與小船所受二卷，合三卷。於焉之間，西北風正吹，大小兩船，不時放砲，次第舉帆，直放西南間烟島外洋。故僉使縣監，指揮諸船，一時追及，則其疾如飛，勢無以執留，只自看望，則前船杳無其形，後船隱然有迷見之狀，而日已落地，莫可瞭望。兩船什物摘奸件記及小船中所得一幅真書牋，竝謄書粘付上送’云。小船中所得一幅書牋謄書，‘英吉利國水師官員下，書爲陳明事。送該憲知悉。據本年閏六月初旬間，有我英吉利國五隻船，送我英國王差定，從各人到天津^北蓮河口，今王差等，俱進京朝，見萬歲爺，因天津外洋水淺，遇有大風，免不得壞船，故各船，不敢在彼處碇泊，今要回粵東候，王差回國，茲經過此處。請該憲給以買食物，自取清水飲用也。左有蓋我王差印爲據矣。嘉慶二十一年月日書。’”

#### English Translation of the Entry by L. George Paik

(“The Korean Record: On Captain Basil Hall’s Voyage of Discovery to the West Coast of Korea” in *Transactions of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* Vol. 24, 1935, 16-19.)

On the 19th day of the seventh moon (the Sixteenth Year of Sunjo (純祖) (Seventh Moon and Day of Pyengin) the King held an audience with courtiers. Yi Chai Hong (李載弘), the Naval Commander of Choong Chung Province (忠清水使), sent a written dispatch concerning the two strange-looking vessels which had been sighted drifting on the sea off Kal-kot (葛串), on Ma Ryang Chin (馬梁鎭). Cho Tai Pok (趙大福), the captain of the Ma Ryang Chin Coastal Guard (該鎭僉使), and Yi Seungnyeol (李升烈), the local officer of the Pi Yin Magistracy (庇仁縣監), sent a joint communication as follows:

The strange looking ships which were sighted drifting off the coast were so large that they could not be towed into the bay, though we employed a large number of boats and men for this purpose. At daybreak of the 14th

the Captain and the Magistrate went to the smaller one of the two ships and made inquiries by writing in Chinese. The men expressed ignorance of these characters by shaking their heads. We inquired again by writing in the Korean letters but they waived their hands to show that they were ignorant of these also. We waived and shouted at each other in this manner for some time but failed to communicate intelligibly with them. Finally one of the crew took a pen and wrote something for us. Their letters, however, bore some resemblance to seal-characters but were not seal-characters and looked a little like Korean letters but were not these either. We could not understand what they wrote.

There were a number of rooms both on the left and right sides of the ship and on both the upper and lower deck. On the ship they had many books. They took out two of these and gave one to the Captain and one to the Magistrate. When we opened the books we found that the letters neither Chinese nor Korean and we could not understand them. We therefore returned the books but they refused to take them and slipped one each into our sleeves. When these books were passed and handled among us we found a document written in Chinese. It seemed to be an official document or communication from their country. We therefore brought that with us. All the crew had their hair cut and wore head covers made of fur or cord. The shape of their hats was like that of an inverted brazier. As to their garments, the upper parts were made of black velvet with buttons on the right side of the front of the coat. Many of the crew wore white trousers the shape of which was like that of Korean leggings, as they were just wide enough to encircle the limbs. They wore white socks which covered their feet. Their shoes were made of black leather and shaped like the "round-toe-shoes" worn by the nobility of the country, but their shoes were laced with shoe-strings. Some of them wore long swords, some short knives, some powder-flasks, and some telescopes. All the rooms were occupied by the crew. Though we could not ascertain the exact number there were certainly at least 80 or 90 persons on board the ship.

We went on board the large ship and made inquiries. The crew, their clothing and the things they carried were the same as on the small vessel. Their writing was neither Chinese nor Korean and they kept shaking their heads in sign that they could not understand our questions. Some of the crew sat down, some stood up, and some walked to and fro on the deck. There was so much hustle and bustle and movement that it was very diffi-

cult to count their number, but the crew was several times the size of that on the small ship. The number of books and the quantity of other furnishings and equipment was also much greater than on the other ship. Both ships, however, were the same in their general shape and make-up. Strange looking, indeed! There were several decks and rooms on every deck and every room was filled with strange looking vessels, valuable utensils and metal and wooden goods. There were so many strange looking things that it was impossible to enumerate them all. As far as we could discover there was only one woman on board. She covered her head with a white cloth and wore a red skirt. There were blacksmith's forges in both of these ships. They made cannon-balls and arrow-heads on board. When the Captain left the ship one of the men gave him a book so we have three volumes in all, including the two received from the small ship.

As soon as the north-west wind started to blow, both the ships suddenly fired cannon and sailed to the south-west to the outer sea off the Island of Yento (烟[煙]島). The Captain and the Magistrate gave orders to our boats to follow them. The ships flew so swiftly that our men could not catch up with them so merely watched them as they sailed away. As we watched the leading ship was soon out of sight and the one astern was also fading into the horizon. Soon after this the sun set and as day deepened into darkness we could watch them no longer. We submit this, the result of our investigation of these ships, and also forward the document in Chinese which we found in the smaller vessel.

The document referred to read as follows:

### Naval Officers of His Majesty the King of England:

Be it known to all authorities to whom these may come that:

During the first part of last June five of our ships conveyed the Embassy of the King of England to China. These ships at first anchored at the entrance to the Pai Lien Ho (白蓮河) river near the Tientsin. The Embassy has now gone to Peking to have audience with the Emperor of China. The sea off Tientsin is quite shallow and should there be a strong wind our ships could not escape being wrecked. It was therefore impossible for them to remain anchor there. These ships are therefore ordered to

proceed to Canton and await there the arrival of the Embassy at Canton and thence to convey the Embassy back to England.

These ships are now passing here on their way to Canton. We request all authorities of the ports where our ships may touch to sell them provisions and to allow them to draw drinking water. In testimony thereof the seal of the Embassy is herewith affixed. Thirty-first Year of the Reign of Chiaching (嘉慶). (1816).

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**Grace Koh** is Lecturer in Korean Literature in the Department of Japan and Korea at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. She focuses on research involving pre-modern Korean literature, primarily of the Goryeo period and early prose traditions. Other research interests include literary and intellectual history, early modern Korean fiction, and comparative literature.

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