

Excavating the Heart of the Goryeo Dynasty: Pyeongchang Special Exhibition, “1,100th Anniversary of Founding the Goryeo Dynasty, the Inter-Korean Joint Excavation of the Manwoldae Palace in Kaesong”

Heart of “One Korea,” Goryeo Royal Palace and its Excavation Process

PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games were held last year, the 1100th anniversary of the Goryeo Dynasty’s establishment. The Goryeo Dynasty successfully accomplished a national unification that far exceeded the scale of reunification during the Three Kingdoms. Although Korea was liberated from the Japanese colonialism for over 70 years by now, it is still confronted with the national woes of the North-South split. Through the PyeongChang Winter Olympics, two Koreas have taken the first step towards becoming a peace regime at this juncture.

Former President Kim Dae-jung visited Pyongyang in June 2000, followed by the successor Roh Moo-hyun in October 2007. The April 2018 inter-Korean summit between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and Supreme Leader of North Korea, Kim Jong-un, was held in the Peace House of Panmunjeom. A subsequent summit was held in the Unification Pavilion of Panmunjeom in May. On September 18, “Pyongyang Joint Declaration of September 2018” was signed by two leaders at the third summit in Pyongyang.

Meanwhile, Do Jong-hwan, the Minister of Culture, Sports, and Tourism of South Korea, who took the lead in the contact group for the summits since March proposed to resume the joint investigation on the Manwoldae, the Royal Palace site of the Goryeo Dynasty. With the temporary amity between two Koreas, on September 6, the Inter-Korea Historian Association agreed upon the three-month joint excavation from September 27 to December 27, to be followed by the heritage conservation project, in presence of Cultural Heritage Administration, Ministry of Unification of South Korea, and North Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation.

The result was the 8th phase of the excavation project, but at this time, the excavation process had to be done manually as North Korea restricted the use of heavy equipment.

This joint excavation at the Manwoldae site is an exemplary case of two Koreas' cooperation in their shared history and culture which persisted throughout strained inter-Korean relations. They agreed upon this project at the 17th Ministerial Talks in 2005, and the Inter-Korea Historian Association of South and North Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation signed an agreement in 2006 as the first step. Even though this project was stopped in January 2016 because of the North Korean nuclear missile launch and shutdown of the Kaesong Industrial Complex,¹ it has yielded outstanding achievements from 2007 to 2018. Throughout the eight phases of the joint excavation work, total 16,500 pieces of relics and artifacts were excavated. Major outcomes consist of 39 building sites, including the Gyeongryeongjeon Hall where the portrait of a king was stored, two embankments, two large stairs, five metal type blocks, a number of celadon pieces, and roof tiles.

Then, why is this intermittent excavation project of the Goryeo Royal Palace site considered so important? "The Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong" is not only a time-honored world heritage, but also a shared cultural heritage from the Goryeo Dynasty that arouses peoplehood of "One Korea." Consistent conservation and management of this heritage is our shared duty. Therefore, the first step towards "One Korea" has been sustained by persistent endeavor of the excavation team members amid the sense of obligation.

13-year Journey of the World Heritage "Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong"

This site was included in the tentative list of North Korea with the title of "Historical Relics in Kaesong" on May 20, 2000, and it was inscribed as the World Heritage with the official title of "Historic Monuments and Sites in

Kaesong" on June 23 of 2013 at the 37th World Heritage Committee held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

It was an overwhelming moment for me as well, memories of the joint excavation work and academic discussions coming across my mind. I participated in the forum called "Academic Conference for the World Heritage Inscription of Kaesong Historic Sites and the Site Visit" in November 2005 at Janamsan Inn, Kaesong, and I was a member of the joint excavation team for the first phase of the project which lasted for three months since May 2007. I had opportunities to participate in the later phases, but somehow ten more years have passed since then.

Actually, North Korea has been consistently working for the inscription of Kaesong Historic Sites since the Complex of Koguryo Tombs was inscribed as the World Heritage in 2004. Meanwhile, the Operational Guidelines was revised in 2005; integrity came to the fore in the category of cultural heritages as well, and the significance of conservation and management plan for the heritages was emphasized. During the preparation for the inscription, the inter-Korean cooperation was deemed necessary, and "Academic Conference for the World Heritage Inscription of Kaesong Historic Sites and the Site Visit" was jointly held in Kaesong on November 18, 2005.

North Korea, however, did not submit the nomination dossier in January 2006. Afterwards, a cultural heritage professional Christopher Young of the United Kingdom visited Kaesong for an advisory mission with the assistance of the UNESCO. North Korea submitted the nomination dossier in January 2007, and it was reviewed as a completed nomination dossier.

At the 32nd World Heritage Committee in Quebec, Canada, this nomination was deferred. There were three reasons behind this deferral. First, the committee requested the reconsideration and justification of the nominated properties to prove their Outstanding Universal Value as the capital of the Goryeo Dynasty. Second, the boundaries of the property and the buffer zones had to be redefined to include all the significant cultural and natural settings. Third, potential threats to the values of the property due to future development had to be carefully considered in defining the buffer zones.

When North Korea prepared the nomination dossier again, the professional who was in charge of the previous technical evaluation in 2007 gave advices. In 2011, the revised nomination dossier was submitted, but it was classified as an incomplete dossier and revision was requested again. Revised

1. For non-English words including Korean ones, the new (revised) Romanization convention established by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism is used in the *Review of Korean Studies*. However, for the place names or cultural heritages in North Korea in this manuscript, the Romanization convention of North Korea is exceptionally adopted since it has been already worldwide used.

version was submitted on February 14 in the same year. However, it was not considered because the deadline was February 1, so it was reviewed and inscribed in 2013 at the 37th World Heritage Committee. Kaesong, which had been the capital of the Goryeo and Joseon Dynasties for about 500 years, went through tedious and rough 13 years after registered on the Tentative List in 2000 until being finally inscribed.

Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong is a serial property composed of 12 components. They include the Manwoldae Palace archaeological site and remains of the Kaesong Chomsongdae (an astronomical and meteorological observatory); five sections of the Kaesong City Walls; the Kaesong Namdae Gate (the main southern city gate in the Inner Wall); Koryo Sunggyungwan (a former high state education institute); Sungyang Sowon (a Confucian private school); Sonjuk Bridge and Phyochung Monuments; the Mausoleum of King Wang Kon with associated Seven Tombs Cluster and Myongrung Tombs Cluster; and the Mausoleum of King Kongmin. The geomantic layout of the city, palace and tomb complexes, and the urban defense system of walls and gates embody the political, cultural, philosophical, and spiritual values of the capital of the Goryeo Dynasty. All twelve components are the representative heritages of Kaesong from the Goryeo and Joseon Dynasties.

Management of such heritages inscribed on the World Heritage List is overseen by the conservation and management system of North Korea, and the state of conservation is regularly confirmed by the UNESCO. Therefore, potential threats to the properties are hardly feasible. However, there are many relics in or around Kaesong that are not included in the components of "Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong." Technically, they are not the targets of the UNESCO-level management, so their conservation and management are not guaranteed even though they are also significant components that form the ancient capital Kaesong. Twelve components of this site are only the representative ones, not the whole property.

Significance of the Pyeongchang Special Exhibition, "Inter-Korean Joint Excavation of the Manwoldae Palace in Kaesong"

This special exhibition was held to commemorate the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympic Games. Its objective was to provide a special experience for

the visitors of the Olympic Games on the 500-year history and culture of the Goryeo Dynasty, which is known as "Korea." The result of the decade-long joint excavation project at the Manwoldae Palace in Kaesong, such as excavated relics and artifacts, was realized through Korea's cutting-edge information technology.

In 2015, "Special Exhibition on the Inter-Korean Joint Excavation of the Manwoldae Palace in Kaesong" was held in the National Palace Museum of Korea from October 13 to November 6 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Korea's liberation. Also, in the same year, an exhibition and an academic forum took place at the Koryo Museum (Koryo Sunggyungwan) in Kaesong until November 15. Both North and South Korean scholars and professionals participated in these events. This exhibition was meaningful as the first exhibition on the joint excavation project and held in North and South Korea at the same time. The Pyeongchang special exhibition, however, was considerably different from the previous ones in terms of the size and contents. The opening ceremony was held on February 9, and the exhibition was held until March 18 in the exhibition hall of Korea Sangjidaegwallyeong High School in Pyeongchang.

This exhibition proudly showcased the first restoration work of the Goryeo Royal Palace's Hoegyeongjeon Hall using 3D technology. There were various experiential events where visitors could feel the 500-year history and culture through state-of-the-art technology. Also, there was a special zone with a theme of a unification, "One Goryeo, North-South Korea Hand in Hand." Here, cooperators from two Korea were introduced and visitors left their wishes for the unification.

The Hoegyeongjeon Hall was the grandest and the most beautiful main hall of the Goryeo Royal Palace, but it was destroyed 600 years ago. This building was digitally restored based on the excavation results from the joint excavation. It is located in the center of a wide courtyard, and to enter this area, a visitor should pass Seungpyungmun Gate, Sinbongmun Gate, Changhapmun Gate, 33 steps of stone stairs, and Hoegyeongmun Gate in order. The Hoegyeongjeon Hall is presumed to be the building of nine front bays by four side bays with a gabled roof. Two restoration proposals were realized based on the opinions of the excavation team and domestic and international scholars: a single-story building and two-story building. The 3D restoration model can be zoomed in or out by the audiences, and corresponding information of each part is automatically linked as a digital content pop-up.

Also, replica stamps of the metal type blocks excavated during the 7th joint excavation project in 2015 were exhibited. Visitors could experience the superior printing technology of the Goryeo Dynasty that is famous for inventing the earliest metal type blocks.

In the similar vein, a dragon-shape roof tile excavated at the Manwoldae Palace site was presented through a kiosk so that visitors could closely observe every detail. Also, 15 pieces of major artifacts such as the convex roof tiles and plates were replicated through 3D printing, and virtual reality simulation of the Manwoldae Palace site was prepared so that visitors could explore the simulated space with the Head Mounted Display tools.

At this exhibition, videos recorded on-site by a professional photographer and videographer specialized in cultural heritages during the ten years of the joint excavation process were presented as well. These videos vividly captured every aspect of people's excitement when the vestiges of the Goryeo Palace were discovered and even the memories of on-site dogs Manwol and Songhak. Audiences can see cordial friendship and passion of the joint excavation team members from these valuable records.

This special exhibition glancing down the decade-long joint excavation project of the Manwoldae Palace in Kaesong was especially meaningful as it was held together with PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games and Paralympics which are the global festival of peace. This exhibition was held at National Palace Museum of Korea again from April 3 to 29.

Future Tasks of the Joint Excavation of the Manwoldae Palace and the Pyeongchang Special Exhibition

Stable cooperation system in the field of the cultural heritages between two Koreas and the joint development project for Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong, in particular, should be prioritized. Main objective of the joint excavation on the Goryeo Royal Palace sites was the World Heritage inscription. As this objective was successfully achieved at this moment, its detailed survey and conservation works are the most critical mission. Also, if the Kaesong tour were resumed, harmonious operation of the tour and excavation survey should be implemented. Other urgent tasks include the restoration of Koryo Sunggyungwan which is currently used as a museum, conservation of the

murals at the Mausoleum of King Kongmin and the installation of observation deck for the murals. Moreover, for the Mausoleum of King Jungjong of the Joseon Dynasty and Queen Jungan (Hureung), that of Queen Sinui (Jereung) in Kaepung county, and Goryeo Royal Tomb in Ganghwado Island which was a temporary capital of the Goryeo Dynasty for about 40 years, another joint excavation project and additional inscription as the UNESCO World Heritage are the pressing tasks ahead.

Furthermore, it is important to educate North Korean cultural heritage professionals through utilizing various facilities in the Kaesong Industrial Complex. This is necessary for the future steps, possibly for the era of post-unification, such as an establishment of a systematic conservation and management plan for all North Korean heritages. General educational scheme may include traditional architecture's conservation, restoration, investigation, preservation works for the artifacts, the latest technology for the archaeological survey, and detailed investigation using 3D scanner. Through exchanging these technologies and thoughts, both South and North Koreas can strengthen their awareness in the conservation and management of cultural heritages and also restoration, and we can build up the joint management system for shared heritages and their history.

However, since Kaesong area is already inscribed on the World Heritage list, current status of the relics and artifacts should be disclosed, and the further investigation on its surrounding area is required for the improvement of the heritages and their surroundings. For instance, the information panel on the heritages and their designation status or markers should be properly installed. These preliminary steps are crucial for preparing "Inter-Korean Conservation Plan for Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong" in the future. This plan can be concretized by sharing ideas through active discussions such as joint academic forums and professional meet-ups.

Proposals discussed above come down to the necessity of "North-South Korean Joint Committee for the Conservation of Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong." An operational entity, "Joint Research Center for Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong" might be helpful as well. This center can be in charge of the exhaustive investigation on the cultural heritages in Kaesong and establish the long-term plans for their repair and restoration. Also, North-South joint research project is deemed necessary to collect more in-depth research works to be applied for the proper conservation of those heritages.

This experience would be an invaluable stepping stone for “Inter-Korean Joint Committee for the DMZ Historic Sites” in the near future.

Meanwhile, some of the excavated materials from the site are not identified or thoroughly studied yet. Not only the name of the buildings and their time period are unidentified, but even the function of an interesting shaped round celadon (65 cm tall and 22 cm in its diameter) is not known. Their analysis requires consistent interaction of corresponding specialists and active discussions between North and South Korea.

There are still a number of destroyed pagodas, temple sites, unidentified mausoleums, and transformed buildings in Kaesong area. Our mission is to recover its historicity and dignity. Moreover, there are heritages forcedly relocated by the brutality of the Japanese imperialism, such as a stone lantern of Hyeonhwasa temple, a pagoda of Namgyewon, a 13-story stone pagoda of Gyeongcheonsa temple (possession by the National Museum of Korea), and a commemorative stele for the reconstruction of Yeonboksa temple whose origin was discovered after a century (currently in the flower bed of Seoul Korail Center). We have to work together to return them to the original site. I hope anyone can crisscross the relics and heritages in Kaesong someday as a journey to explore the Goryeo Dynasty like the Goryeo people and Kaesong citizens.

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Appendix



Figure 1. Hoegyungjeon Hall Area of the Manwoldae Palace Site



Figure 2. Northwestern Side of the Excavation Site before the First Excavation in 2007



Figure 3. Author Cleaning the Excavated Materials from the First Excavation in 2007

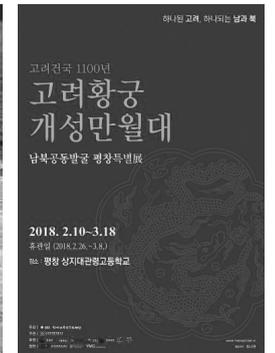


Figure 4. Poster of the Pyeongchang Special Exhibition



Figures 5-6. The Exhibition Hall



Figure 7. Experiences at the Exhibition: Replica Stamps of the Goryeo Metal Types Excavated in 2015



Figure 8. 3D Simulation of Roof Tiles Excavated from the Goryeo Royal Palace Site



Figure 12. Photo Zone of the K-Pop Star, Daniel Kang, in the Goryeo Royal Costume



Figure 13. Visual Images and Videos for the Decade-long Joint Excavation Project at the Manwoldae Palace Site



Figure 9. First 3D Restoration of the Hoegyeongjeon Hall in the Manwoldae Palace Site: Digital Restoration of the Hoegyeongjeon Hall Destroyed 600 years ago and Two Proposals of the Single-story and Two-story Buildings Based on the Excavated Materials and Analysis of the Professionals



Figure 14. North Korean Cheerleading Team and Board Members Visited the Pyeongchang Special Exhibition Held at Korea Sangjidaegwallyeong High School on March 17, 2018. An Byungwoo, a Chairman of the Inter-Korea Historian Association (left) Explains the Exhibited Materials for Them. (source: Inter-Korean Historian Association)



Figure 10. 3D Printed Replicas of the Artifacts Excavated from the Manwoldae Palace Site

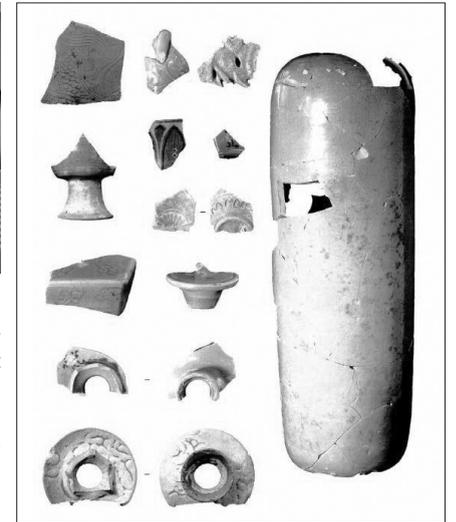


Figure 15. Celadon Pieces and an Interestingly Shaped Round Celadon Excavated from the Site



Figure 11. Manwoldae Walk Experience Using the HMD Goggle

