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석사학위논문

# The Stories of Old Tombs in Korea

(무덤이 들려주는 이야기 한국사·번역논문)

제주대학교 통역번역대학원

한영과

고 경 희

2018年 7月

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The Stories of Old Tombs in Korea

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Preface

## Let's visit the old tombs and see the world in the old times

Tombs are for people who passed away. People in the past feared death, but they also were curious and imagined about afterlife. So, in order that the dead found their comforts in the afterlife, people made tombs for them, like they built houses. Inside a tomb, people also buried grave goods, a dead person's personal belongings.

Old tombs and grave goods are precious materials in history research. It's because tombs have different styles and structures according to periods and regions. Artifacts which were discovered not only enable researchers to learn about how people in the past lived, but also what kinds of cultural exchanges occurred between countries. Old tombs are telling us many stories.

There are many tombs in Korea which has great significance in studying our history, such as the royal tombs of the Joseon Dynasty which are designated UNESCO World Heritage and the tomb of King Mu-ryeong which holds the key to secrets of Baekje's culture. There are unique tombs like Cheonmachong and Muryongchong whose owners haven't been revealed.

Listen to the stories that old tombs in Korea have for you: stories about the first king of a kingdom, a general who was courageous in the face of crisis, a patriotic martyr who stood with dignity in death, an extraordinary woman who proudly dictated to the world, and ordinary citizens who cried, not so long from now, that they were the true owners of this country.

On nation holidays, visit you grandfathers' and grandmothers' tombs and share memories and stories of their lives with you family. Maybe, you can find out about our history that you didn't know.

*The Stories of Old Tombs in Korea* introduces historically important tombs and talks about stories about them.

In the future, what kind of stories are we going to tell our descendants standing in front of our tombs? For a day like it in the future, why don't you start your wonderful stories to tell?

October 2016

Aunties of Cheongdongmalgup who are writing stories for the future generations.

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## Chapter 1

# Tombs of the Founders of Dynasties

# The Life of the Man who Began the History of a Thousand Years

## The Five Tombs in Gyeongju

There are many tombs of Silla kings in Gyeongju.  
I, among them, am the special one with five tombs gathered.

Here's the story of how Silla was founded.



It was a time long before even Silla was founded. At that time Gyeongju consisted of six tribes that made their own villages and are lived in harmony. However, as time went by, the number of villagers increased, and this brought distrust and discord among them. So the Elders of those villages had to discuss this matter.

"We can no longer sit on our hands."

"Agreed. What if a war occurs?"

"What should we do?"

"How about joining our six villages and upholding a king to rule the entire country?"

"Why, that's a fine idea! If we become one country, there would be no more fights in our lands."

"Then, who should be our King?"

"Let's find someone who the people can trust and follow."

First of all, the Elders decided they would find the right location for the Capital of the new country. So they climbed up a high hill where they could see all the villages and scanned them carefully corner to corner. Then, one of the Elders shouted in surprise, "Look! Look there! There's some kind of a light coming out of the open well down the hill!"

"That's strange. Let's go and investigate."

They all hurried to the well. There, a mysterious aura hung in the air; they saw a fair white horse on its knees which looked just like it was bowing to the elders. The elders were surprised as they bravely approached the strange vision, but the horse flew and disappeared into the sky.

Only a purple egg was lying on the spot where the horse once was.

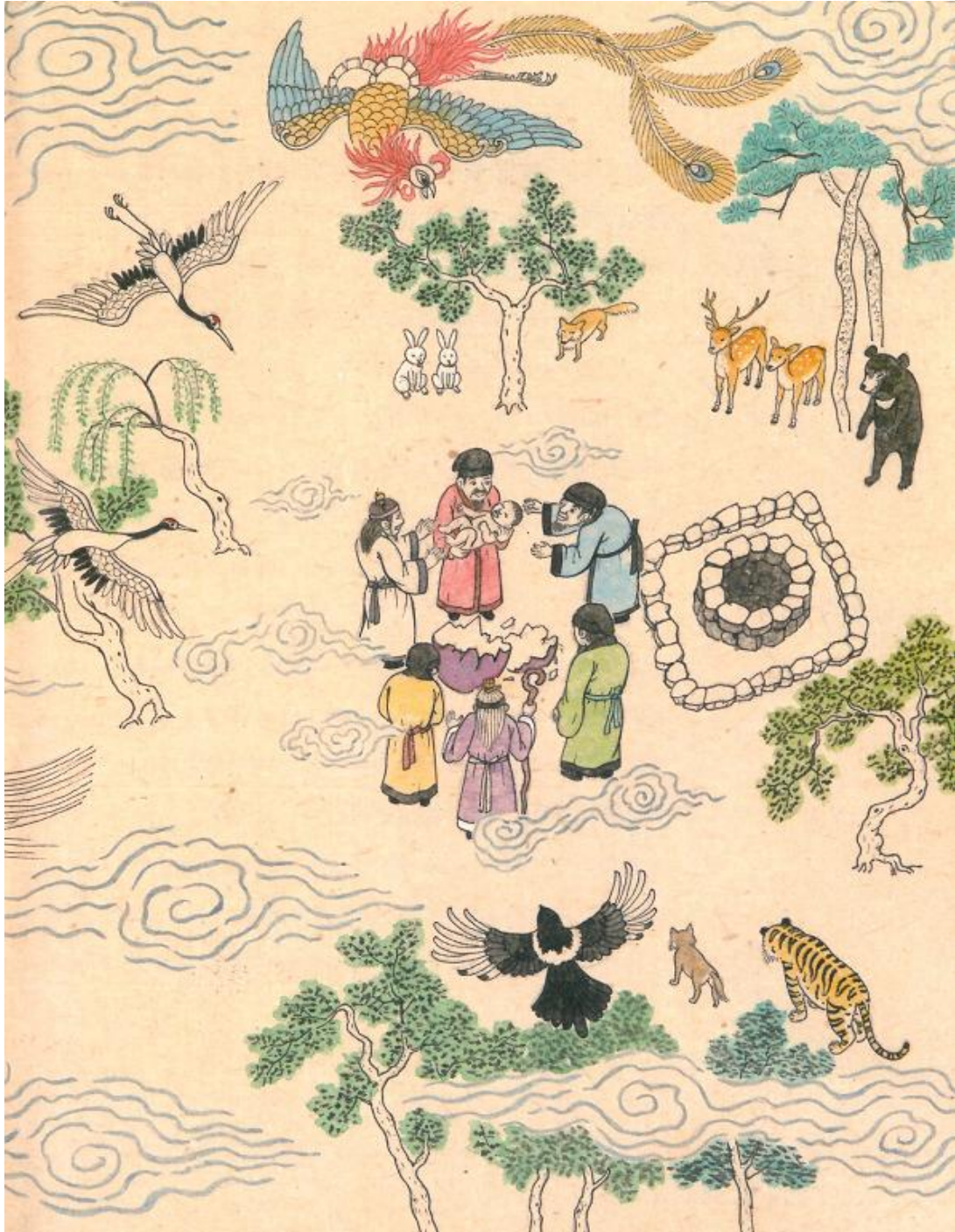
"It must be a gift from the heavens."

At that exact moment the egg hatched and a baby boy came out of it.

"This boy will become our king."



The elders called him Hyeokgeose; they gave him this name in the hopes that he would make the world bright. And they gave him the surname Park as they found him in an egg that looked like a gourd, which is pronounced *Park* in Korean. That's how Park Hyeokgeose came to be.



On that same day, Saryangri Village also saw a strange thing happen. A dragon, with the head of a chicken, appeared by a Alyeong Well. The dragon delivered a baby girl out of its armpit and then soared into the sky. The baby's face was lovely, like an angel. But her lips protruded like the bill of a bird.

The villagers took the child to a stream in the north of Wolseong Fortress. As they washed her with clean water the hideous bill fell from her face. From then on, the stream was called Balcheon. And the baby girl was given a name, Alyeong, after the name of the well.

The people were amazed at the series of mysterious events. "These children are destined to become the future king and queen of this country," they said.

The elders and villagers of six tribes built a palace at Namsan Mountain, in Gyeongju, and devotedly raised the two children there. When they reached the age of thirteen, they got married and became King and Queen of the country named Seorabeol.

Why is the name Seorabeol and not Silla? Because we started using the name "Silla" during the reign of King Jijeung in the early sixth century. In the beginning, Silla had many names like Seorabeol, Seobeol, Sara, Saro, and Gyerim.

Pak Hyeokgeose ruled the country peacefully. The people loved their King and Queen who, they believed, were sent from heaven. The King died sixty-one years after he began his reign. His death was as mysterious as his birth.

On the day the King died, a white horse from the sky carried his body up to the heavens. Then, the sky began to weep and it didn't stop for the next seven days.

On the seventh day, the sky suddenly parted with a terrible thunder and the body of the late King fell from the sky, torn into five pieces. Then

the queen, who was witnessing these events, suddenly died.

The People of Seorabeol grieved over the deaths of their King and Queen and decided to hold a funeral for them. But everytime they tried to gather the severed pieces of the king's body, a giant snake appeared and stopped them.

"This must be a message from the heavens," said the people, "Let's bury his remains as they lay." So, the people buried his head and quartered body in five separate tombs called "Oreung." That's me.

Is this story hard to believe? Every country has its own foundation myth. This narrative shows the ancestors' desire for you to remember the meaning of it and to protect the land we inherited.

If you come to see me, remember, you are the descendants of the people who lived in this special land that the heavens provided us. That's why every one of you is special.

# The King who Embraced the World with Tolerance

## The Royal Tomb of King Wanggeon

I am the tomb of King Taejo Wanggeon, who founded Goryeo.

He ended the turmoil during The Age of The Later Three

Kingdoms and united them as one country.

There's a lot of stories I want to tell you when we get to meet  
someday.

But, to do that, we have one thing to do first:

Unite our parted land, just like King Wanggeon did.





To tell you all the stories of King Wanggeon would take many days and nights. That's because we first need to know about Gyeonhwon and Gung-ye who were also leaders during the era of the Later Three Kingdoms. Shall we begin with the story of Gung-ye?

#### The Age of the Later Three Kingdoms

It's the period when three kingdoms, Silla, Later Baekje, and Later Goguryeo, conflicted with one another. The lives of people of Silla were miserable due to the continuous poor harvests, wars, and the corrupt nobility of the kingdom.

During this turbulent time, new powers rose across the kingdom, every head of these new circles built up their own kingdoms.

Gyeonwhon, in 900, founded Later Baekje under the slogan of revitalization of Baekje. On the other hand, Gungye also founded Later Goguryeo, taking the land of old Goguryeo.

The Age of the Later Three Kingdoms lasted until a new kingdom, Goryeo, achieved the unification.

Gung-ye became king in 901 A.D., building his kingdom across the Songdo area (today's Gaeseong), the old territory of Goguryeo. To win the hearts of the people he named the kingdom "Later Goguryeo."

He expanded his power day by day, calling himself Maitreya and telling people that he was the one who would save the world. Wanggeon, one of generals of Later Goguryeo, was recognized for his military success against Later Baekje, and he rapidly gained trust from Gung-ye, who was not an easy man to please.

Gung-ye was, in fact, an impatient and ruthless leader. Whoever crossed him couldn't escape death. People were terrified at his cruelty and afraid that they might be a victim of it someday. Little by little the people, as well as his counselors, turned away from Gung-ye.

In the end, powerful families of the country overthrew Gung-ye and



upheld Wanggeon as their new leader. King Wanggeon moved the Capital to Gaegyeong and began the dynasty of a new kingdom, "Goryeo."

Until that point, Later Baekje, ruled by Gyeonwhon, was the most powerful kingdom. Gyeonwhon founded Later Baekje in Wansanju, the old territory of Baekje (today's Jeonju), swearing he would get back at Silla for destroying the original Baekje. Later Baekje wielded its power over its neighbors by winning a series of battles against Goryeo.

However, political chaos began as Gyeonwhon's sons fought over the throne. The eldest son, Singeom overthrew his father eventually, and Gyeonwhon was forced to flee him. Hearing the news, Wanggeon brought Gyeonwhon to Goryeo.

"If you, *Sangbu* (a title for an elder with a great respect), could support Goryeo it would be the greatest joy for the kingdom," said Wanggeon.

"Why do you call me *Sangbu*?" questioned Gyeonwhon.

"You are my senior and you, absolutely, have more experience than I do, so I naturally you deserve my respect. I implore you to guide me, for I am young and still have a lot to learn."

Gyeonwhon was captivated by Wanggeon's display of sincerity, respect, and lack of animosity. Unlike Gung-ye, who swayed his power ruthlessly, King Wanggeon won people over to his side with generosity.

#### King Wanggeon's Conciliation Policy

Wanggeon, the founder of Goryeo, learned a lesson that he should make peace with power houses in Goryeo, or even the kings of enemy countries, having watched the cases of Gung-ye and Gyeonhweon. He chose to win over the hearts of powerful families with appealing presents or through matrimony, rather than to oppress them.

Also, he was actively engaged in taking care of people of Silla and Later Baekje exhausted with war, plague, and poverty. These kinds of conciliation policies that

Wanggeon led became the solid foundation for Goryeo to achieve the unification of the Later Three Kingdoms.

Some time later, King Wanggeon's army, along with Gyeonwhon's military support, attacked Later Baekje and seized the victory. The King captured Gyeonwhon's heart so truly and completely that a father could even wage a war against his son.

On the other hand, Silla (which had unified the three kingdoms), weakened by the continuous invasions from Later Baekje and Later Goguryeo, kept on losing its power and control. The last king of Silla, King Gyeongsoon, yielded the kingdom to Wanggeon and swore fealty to him.



#### Downfall of the Unified Silla

Silla went through perils constantly in the late days. Political conflicts among the noble

got worse and worse, and so did the extravagance of the central nobility. As the ordinary people's lives were miserable, rebellions rose up across the country. The hopes and aims in every class's mind differed from one another, and this brought about the downfall of Silla's history of a thousand years.

"Please, take my daughter as your bride. This is a token of our friendship," said King Wanggeon. Wanggeon made his daughter marry the king of Silla, making his former enemy a member of his family.

Another time, when Balhae was destroyed by Kitan in 936, Balhae's Crown Prince, Dae Gwanghyeon, along with the homeless survivors of his kingdom, knocked on the door of Goryeo asking for a shelter. King Wanggeon granted Dae Gwanghyeon the use of the royal surname "Wang," permitted ceremonies for honoring Balhae's late kings, and allowed him to rule over Hwanghaedo Province.

Now, Goryeo had not only united the original three kingdoms but had also inducted the kingdom of Balhae. Future people will praise this unification as both true and complete, in that it didn't borrow from, or involve, any foreign power.

Even after achieving the unification, Wanggeon poured every effort into ruling the kingdom wisely. Firstly, He focused on comforting the lives and minds of the people who were now tired from the long-lasting war. He set up a relief institution to help the poor, while allaying peoples' burdens through the reduction of taxes. Also, he lead the example by exhibiting a thrifty lifestyle in both clothing and in how he managed his palace.

He married twenty-nine wives in order to make Goryeo's political status stable.

"For now, your house rules this area, but you can move further in the future. If your daughter's son sits on the throne, you too will have enormous power over the entire country," Wanggeon said.

Subsequently, he fathered 34 children. Since each family clan had a secure hold over its hometown, and the people in it, Wanggeon wanted to keep the clans close by making them his relatives. In this way, he could keep the kingdom peaceful.

King Wanggeon also used Buddhism to increase the royal power. In those days, every powerful house used to build temples to promote their standing, but Wanggeon strictly forbade it. He prohibited them from building temples without his permission. This was because the clans' growth could have eventually meant the weakening of his royal authority.

But he fixed the temples that were damaged during the war and built new ones across the kingdom so that common people could easily visit them. What's more, Buddhist occasions such as The Lotus Lantern Festival and The Palgwan Assembly were deemed national occasions. These policies were to strengthen unity, showing the people whose faith was deep-rooted in Buddhism that their country had the same faith as them.

However, the king's benevolent and receptive ruling didn't last forever. In May 943, at the age of sixty-seven, he passed away. Even at his deathbed, he maintained a king's demeanor.

"There is no need to grieve over my death; It is as natural as returning home."

It is said that he gave little importance or distress to his death and, instead, reprimanded his vassals for crying too loud.

When Goryeo had its sixth king, Seongjong, a minister named Choi Seung-ro made a written evaluation of the late kings. In this evaluation, he wrote about King Wanggeon as follows:

"King Taejo Wanggeon kept wise people dearly by his side and he liked to do benevolent acts. He always respected others' opinions before his, and he was always courteous when asking their opinions. The King never forsook men of talent and supported them

wholeheartedly so that they could focus their effort on their jobs. He didn't hesitate for a moment both to try to recruit a good man and to expel a bad one.

All of these aspects were derived from his personal nature. Since he was not born of royalty, he had had many difficult and turbulent experiences. And, naturally, he gained the insight to tell those who were true from those who were deceiving. Also, he was excellent at predicting future successes and failures."

It's not common for a king to be praised this much. Maybe what was needed to unify the Later Three Kingdoms, during such a chaotic era, and to become a ruler that could touch the people of his kingdom, was not overwhelming power but a kind, considerate nature that enabled him to be side by side with his subjects.

You want to come to see me right away? Sorry to say, but you can't. It's because I am in Gaeseong in North Korea. Gaeseong had been the Capital of Goryeo for five hundred years. When we achieve *our* unification, come to see me. I will tell you much of King Wanggeon.



# The Story of a Father and Son in the Wild Silver Grass

## Geonwonreung Tomb

I am Geonwonreung, the tomb of King Taejo Yi, Seonggye.

Why is it that the tomb of the founder of a kingdom has  
unruly silver grass on it?

Well, I have a special story to tell you about it.

Will you listen to my story?



Yi Seong-gye, since childhood, was brilliant and a very talented martial artist. Above all, no one could best him at archery. By stopping the Red Turbans and fighting off invasions from Japanese pirate raiders, he set himself apart as one of the best generals in Goryeo.

Meanwhile, in China, Ming drove Yuan out and founded a new dynasty. Ming demanded that Goryeo give part of its northern territory to him, and this made King Woo and General Choi Yeong of Goryeo insist on a military campaign over the Liaodong area to show Ming that Goryeo should not to be underestimated in this manner.

However, General Yi Seong-gye, despite the order from King Woo, said the campaign could not be completed for four specific reasons: it was wrong to oppose a big country like Ming's; With all available forces heading north, the southern area of Goryeo could be in danger from possible invasions from Japanese pirate raiders; it was difficult to draft an army in the summer when subjects should be focusing on crop cultivation; lastly, the summer heat could be the worst environment for weapons and the worst environment for an epidemic to spread among soldiers.

But the king was determined to do as he wished, and Yi Seong-gye had no other choice but to lead the army for Wihwado Island. Conditions, however, weren't very favorable to the Goryeo army as it was the rainy season in the height of summer. The general saw the campaign was no longer able to proceed. In the end, Yi Seong-gye took the reigns and returned to Gaegyeong and seized power of the government by driving King Woo off of the throne. This incident was, what we now call, *The Wihwado Retreat*. And this was the pivotal moment for the beginning of the foundation of the Joseon Dynasty.

The fall of Goryeo and the rise of Joseon

Yi Seong-gye disobeyed the order of Choi Yeong that he should help Yuan and attack Ming, and he returned from Wihwado island to Gaegyeong and sacked the Capital. Then, he dethroned King Woo and sat his son, King Chang on the throne. But afterwards, Yi Seong-gye once again overthrew the king only to replace him with the puppet king, King Gongyang. Later, Yi Seong-gye disposed of King Gongyang after all and built the new country, Joseon.

At the time, the whole country had suffered from the power struggles between noble houses. They were prone to all forms of corruption and commandeered broad swaths of farmland by taking them from the common people. Yi Seong-gye initiated reform policies with the new and rising upper class, *Sinjin Sadaebu*, to look after the lives of the Goryeo people. He returned the lands, which the noble houses unjustly acquired, back to people and fixed the tax policy.

#### Sinjin Sadaebu

It was a newly appearing class at the end of Goryeo. These men studied Sung Confucianism, and they passed the national exam and became officials. They played the critical roles in reforming Goryeo and also in founding Joseon.

The Goryeo Dynasty faced its downfall eventually, and Yi Seong-gye founded the new dynasty, Joseon, in Hanyang. Of course there were people in opposition to the new kingdom; especially, loyal officials like Jeong Mongju, who objected to the foundation of a new country, risking his life to preserve the old dynasty. But Yi Bangwon, the fifth son of Yi Seong-gye, played a big part in purging the kingdom of opponents like Jeong Mongju.

#### The Strife of Princes

It indicates the two strifes between the sons of King Taejo Yi Seong-gye over the crown in the early Joseon.



When Taejo chose his youngest son, Bangseok, born by his second wife Queen Sindoek, as the Crown Prince, not among his older sons born by his first wife Queen Sin-eui, the fifth son Bangwon found the decision unacceptable. He killed two sons of his step mother, Crown Prince Bangseok and Bangbeon, which is called the First Strife of Princes.

After that, Bangwon's older brother Bang-gwa succeeded the throne as the second king of Joseon, Jeongjong.

As King Jeongjong had no heir, Bangwon started a war against his brother, Bang-gan, over the seat of Crown Prince. Removing Bang-gan, Bangwon seized the victory and later became the third king, Taejong. This is the Second Strife of Princes.



King Taejo Yi Seong-gye had many sons. Not only did he have six sons with his first wife, Queen Sin-eui, but there two more sons with the second wife, Queen Sindoek. Yi Seong-gye's older sons, born to Queen Sin-eui, greatly helped him in establishing the new country, Joseon. But the King picked his youngest son, Bangseok, as the Crown Prince, over his other sons who had actually contributed to him winning the throne. This created a

sizeable problem.

"Brothers, does this make any sense to you? We contributed to this nation's foundation. We can't let this happen," said Yi Bangwon.

"You're absolutely right. But what can we do about it?" voiced another brother.

Yi Bangwon, together with his brothers, rose in revolt, slayed the Crown Prince, and their other half-brother, Bangbeon. Afterwards, they tried to establish order in the regime by crowning a new prince among themselves. Without a doubt, Bangwon had a good reputation when it came to contributions to the country. However, he yielded the honor to his older brother Yi Bang-gwa, who became the second king of Joseon, Jeongjong.

But, the ambition of Yi, Bangwon caused a second strife among the Princes. Eventually, Bangwon became the third king, Taejong, succeeding the throne after his brother. As bloody battles occurred between the brothers during a time when the priority was to stabilize and strengthen the kingdom, King Taejong's father, Yi Seong-gye's concern grew deeper and deeper. Tired and disgusted by the events, Yi Seong-gye, became rooted in his hometown, Hamheung.

Bangwon, who was now king, sent messengers to win back his father's heart. Yet, these messengers never came back to the Capital, and no one understood why. The truth was Yi Seong-gye, still full of rage and hatred against his son, killed or imprisoned these messengers. This was the origin of the term *Messenger to Hamheung*, which we use when we don't hear back from someone.

But, a Buddhist priest and trusted friend, Muhak, spent many hours persuading Yi Seong-gye to finally return to Hanyang. Yi Seonggye lived in Hanyang until he died at the age of 73.

"I wish I could go back to my hometown. When I'm dead, bury me in Hamheung!"

King Taejong, Yi Bangwon, was deeply troubled with his father's wish. Even if it's true that he gave his father a great deal of trouble and disappointment while he was alive, he would not continue to be an undutiful son in his death. Visiting his parents' tombs as often as possible was one of his basic, filial duties, but now that he was King he could not just leave the Capital for the long journies to Hamheung.

In the end he disobeyed his father's will a final time by erecting his tomb in Joseon but tried to free himself from guilt by choosing the best site in the kingdom.

Donggureung, or the Nine Eastern Tombs, situated in Guri (Gyeonggido Province) was so named because the tombs of nine kings were gathered east of Hanyang's royal palace.

Geonwonreung was placed in the highest spot among the tombs, deservedly for the founder of Joseon. Though he buried his father in the best place in his country, King Taejong still regretted not abiding by his father's will to bury him in Hamheung.

So, he decided to bring the soil and silver grass from Hamheung to cover the tomb. Ever since, Geonwonreung has been covered with thick silver grass.

Taejong did everything he could think of to appease his father, but what did Taejo Yi Seonggye think about his son? Did his fury about his son's uprising and disobedience dissolve at last?

When you visit me, ask the silver grass if it is still bristles with disgust.

## Chapter2

# The Tombs of those who were Courageous in the face of Crisis

# A General's Grief Over the Downfall of His Nation

## The Tomb of General Gyebaek

I am the tomb of Baekje's brave general, Gyebaek.

His loyalty to preserving his country with his life  
brought him to kill his own family before his final battle.

If you listen to my story,  
you might be able to understand his desperation.



#### The Battle of Hwangsanbeol

It is the battle between Silla and Baekjae. In 660, The alliance army of Silla and Tang attacked Baekje. Baekje's army led by General Gyebaek fought against Silla at Hwangsanbeol, today's Nonsan in Chungcheongnamdo Province. Baekje army fought bravely but was defeated and this led to the country's destruction.

I'll tell you about General Gaebaek's last battle, known to us as the Battle of Hwangsanbeol. In 660, Silla's ambition to unite the three kingdoms of the Korean Peninsula began to emerge with attacks on Baekje. The army of Silla, supported by Tang's army, was in high spirits. King Uija summoned Gyebaek, the bravest of all the generals in Baekje.

"I command you to lead an army and fight for the kingdom!"

But, his army was only five thousand strong. It was an grossly inadequate number, compared to the fifty thousand men in the Silla army.

#### The Silla-Tang Alliance

It indicates the joined forces of Silla and Tang formed by Silla to achieve the unification of the Three Kingdoms. Kim Chunchu of Silla formed a military tie with Tang and conquered the Capital of Baekje, Sabiseong Fortress, in 660, ultimately destroying Baekje. Pushed by this victory, Silla conquered Goguryeo as well in 668.

Before marching to the final battle, Gyebaek first went back to his home. He drew out his sword and gathered up his wife and children.

"Baekje now has to fight against the vast armies of Silla and Tang, and the fate of this kingdom is at stake. Defeat means it's your destiny to be captured and enslaved, so it's better to keep honor in death than to face humiliation in life."

His wife begged him to spare their children's lives, bursting into tears. But his blade did had no mercy for them.

As horrible as it was, Gyebaek believed this decision was the only



option because he understood the inevitability of Baekje's demise better than anyone else.

Having killed his own wife and children, Gyebaek stood before his army and said,

"A long time ago, Yue had an army of only five thousand like us, but it destroyed Wu's vast army of seven hundred thousand. Today, we all fight and do what we do with our might, and we shall win and bring glory to our kingdom!"

With such determination, Gyebaek headed for the battlefield. But, he saw it reckless for his army to fight the Silla army in the open fields of Hwangsanbeol. He divided the army into three smaller commands and had the center command, that he led, guard Sanjikri Fortress. He put the left wing in Hwangryeong Fortress and the right wing in Mo-chonri Fortress. His strategy was to attack the Silla army simultaneously when it got near to the narrow gateway of the mountain ridge.

Having close battles against Baekje because of Gyebaek's strategy, Silla's army could longer underestimate Baekje. On the contrary, they were overwhelmed by their enemy's high spirits who staked everything on this battle.

So, Gyebaek's army won a few battles against Silla. As Silla army's morale dropped, a general of Silla, Kim Pumil, called his son, Gwanchang.

"Ride to enemy's gate now and fight!"

"I will, Father. I'll cut their general's head off in Hwarang's honor."

#### Hwarang

In Silla, there was a group of discipline that comprised of the young from twelve-year-olds to eighteen-year-olds. Not only members of Hwarang gathered here to learn literal studies, but they also refined their military skills. Especially, they lived sincerely by Five Disciplines of Hwarang.

On his father's command, Gwanchang, dashed to the enemy line all by himself without any hesitation. But, soon enough, he got caught by the soldiers of Baekje.

"What kind of a fool dared to come here alone?"

As Gwanchang removed his helmet, Gyebaek looked at him in astonishment. He thought this sole warrior must be a young man, but actually he was a mere boy.

"Indeed, Silla's soldiers are fearless as they say. When a mere boy is as brave as this, we shouldn't expect anything less from the grown men."

Impressed by Gwanchang's bravery and sympathetic for his youth, Gyebaek released him.

"Your strong spirit bought your life and safe return, so go back to your camp and cultivate yourself for the future!"

While returning, Gwanchang suddenly stopped the horse because one of the Five Disciplines struck his mind; that is that you never retreat from your enemy. He now turned back to the enemy's field to attack again. This time, Gyebaek couldn't spare him. He had his head severed and sent it back to Silla's army lines with attached to the horse's saddle. All the men of the Silla army, shocked to see his head on the saddle, became filled with fury. The depressing air disappeared and all of the sudden their rage made them rush at the enemy.

This was the general's strategic move to raise soldiers' morale by sending his little boy to the enemy and making a sacrifice of his young life.

Gyebaek and his army couldn't hold their fortresses against the enemy while berserk with rage. Hwangsanbeol was soaked in crimson, the color of the blood that the Baekje army spilt that day. The battle resulted in Baekje losing power as a kingdom and its then destruction by the Silla-Tang alliance.

I am the site that is reported to hold Gyebaek's body, having been buried in



haste, after he died at Hwangsansbeol.

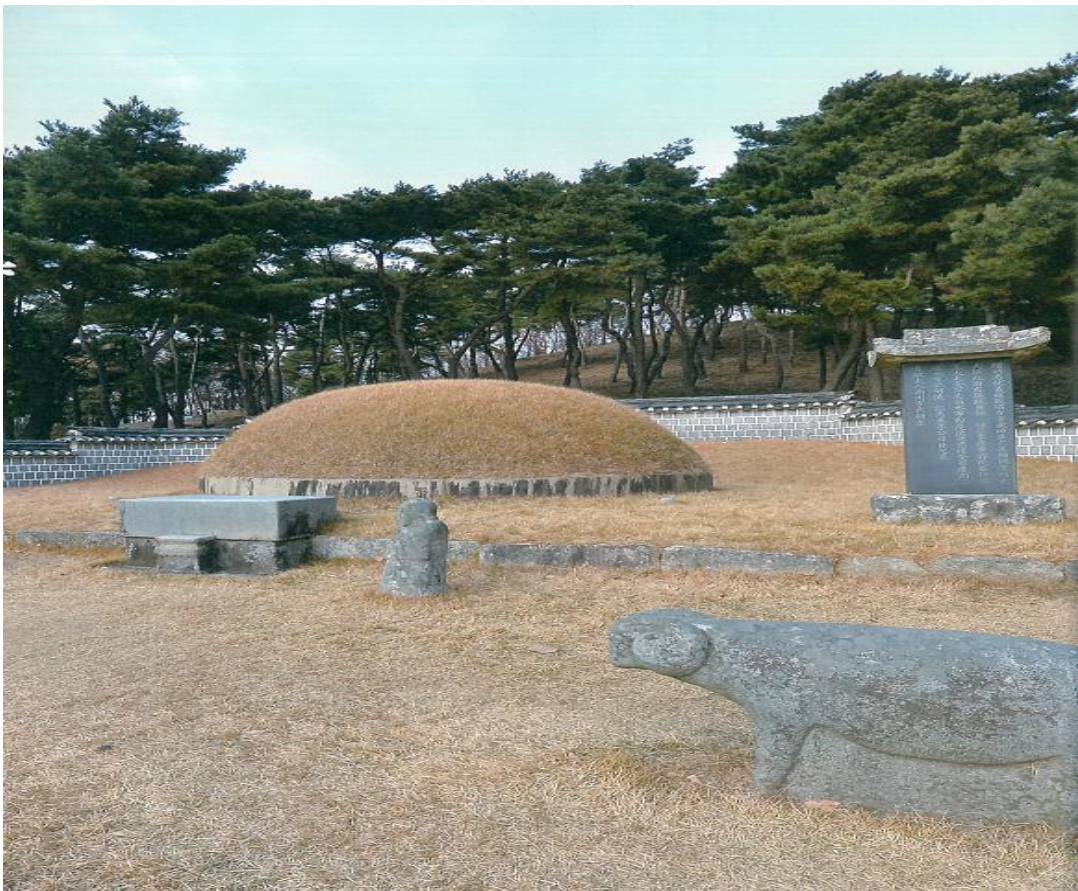
People visiting me say that they can feel his sorrow, maybe because it's the tomb of a general who died with his country. But, sadness isn't all that is there. Behind this veil of sorrow, you can also feel his firm will and strong courage. When you have a tough time, come and see me. Maybe, you can hear the general's whispers encouraging you to stand and fight against all odds.

## An Unbreakable Will Even Before Death

### The Tomb of Chungmugong Yi in Asan

"If you seek to live, you will die. If you seek to die, you will  
live!"

These are the words of Admiral Yi Sunsin.  
I am the one that best understands the meaning of this  
because I am Admiral Yi's tomb.  
I'll tell you the story of Yi Sunsin who was there for the  
country even on the brink of his death."



"Your Majesty, I've brought the most calamitous news. Our navy, under Admiral Won-gyun's leadership, was severely defeated in the battle in Chilcheonryang."

"Is this true? But, we've not lost a battle, against those wretched Japanese, since Imjin year. What led this to happen?"

"Not only that, Admiral Won-gyun lost his life in the battle. Your Majesty, I beseech you to send Yi Sunsin and make him guard our waters!"

"Ahh, Yi, Sunsin..."

In July 1597, the court of Joseon was in a total state of shock from hearing the news of their defeat in Chilcheonryang. Fear manifested on King Seonjo's face. It was a natural reaction as the news brought him back to the nightmare of the Imjin year.

#### The Imjin-waeran and the Jeongyu-waeran

These are the two wars caused by the invasions of Japan from 1592 to 1598. The first invasion in the year of Imjin is called the Imjin-waeran and the second invasion in the year of Joengyu is called the Jeongyu-waeran.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi waged the war to unite Japan and stabilize the nation by diverting the inward heat of his army elsewhere. But, when he died, Japanese army retreated from Joseon and the long war of seven years finally ended.

During this period, Joseon was left with devastated lands, lost lives of countless people, and destroyed cultural assets of great value.

During the Imjin-waeran, it took only twenty days for the Japanese army to take over the Capital after landing in Busan, and only two months for them to march up north to Hamgyeongdo Province through Pyeongyang.

The sudden war disrupted the whole country and forced it into continuous days of peril. The war had ended two hundred years of peace, that the Joseon Dynasty had upheld, in a moment's time.

Regardless, the commoners put forth effort to protect the country. On

land, the civil militia rose up from all over to defend their country; and The Joseon navy bravely outdid the Japanese in battles on water. Above all, the battles led by Admiral Yi Sunsin were outstanding in achievement. Since Admiral Yi protected the water rigorously and blockaded every food and arms supply route for the Japanese army on land, the land forces began to lose the strength. So, after a year, they had to retreat from Joseon. But now, where did this praiseworthy hero of the Imjin-waeran go? Well, you'll have to listen to my story just a little while longer to find out.

In January 1597, only four years after Japan's retreat, Japan sought to invade Joseon once more. This is what we call the Jeong-yu War. Hearing the news of the invasion, King Seonjo ordered Yi Sunsin to lead his navy to the waters surrounding Busan.

Yi Sunsin, who knew the sea better than anyone else, wouldn't follow his king's orders. Doing what he was commanded meant being caught in a ambush set by Japan. Whatever the cause, Yi Sunsin couldn't escape punishment for his disobedience. King Seonjo was furious enough to transfer Yi Sunsin, in chains, to Hanyang and sentence him to death.

However, many officials, including Prime Minister, Ryu Seongryong, thought they could not risk losing an asset like Yi Sunsin. As the oldest minister, Jeong Tak, pleaded for mercy; Seonjo acquiesced to spare Yi Sunsin's life but ordered him to serve in a war under Gwon Yul, as a common soldier as punishment.

"Let Yi Sunsin protect our seas again. I appoint him the Naval Commander of the Three Provinces."

So, Yi recovered his position as an admiral to protect the sea. But, there were only twelve ships battleships remaining.

"Seek to die, you'll live, and seek to live, you will die," Yi Sunsin is famously quoted as saying.

Before going to war in Myeongnyang, Admiral Yi braced himself



before his navy;. And he stood as an example, in the very front, leading the other ships into battle. Generally, the commander's ship is found in the rear, to lead and command the fleet, so you can see how this battle was exceptional.

Myeongnyang indicates the narrow waterway between Jindo Island and Haenam, and it used to be called Wuldolmok which means, in Korean, the strait that swirls and wails.

"Corner the Japanese navy toward Wuldolmok."

Yi Sunsin lured the enemies in and trapped them in the narrow waterway. Then, while their ships were swept up into the choppy waters, he began to attack. Thanks to this clever strategy, the Joseon navy earned an astonishing victory.



Actually, this was the time when a sudden turn also occurred in the Japanese government. The ruler of Japan, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, died and the Japanese army in Joseon, losing their power figure, also lost the upper-hand in the war and dispersed.

At the time of the Jeongyu War, The Japanese army mostly stayed in the the Jeollado Province. It was also here that had showed Admiral Yi's impregnable defense and where Admiral Yi's navy attacked the retreating Japanese and took victory once again.

This battle is known as the Noryang Battle, a very well-known battle to us. Unfortunately, Admiral Yi was shot and lost his life in the midst of the conflict. But he was resolute even as he lay dying.

"Do not announce my death!"

He was worried that word of his death could depress his mens' morale. Can you feel the lionhearted spirit of him holding his post even in death?

It was probably his indomitable will that enabled him to lead his armies to victory in every battle he had.

His drive to fulfill his duties, even in a crisis, was the same as when he was just a young man.

I'll tell you a story that happened when he applied for the national military examination for the first time. During the test, the horse he was riding fell on the ground and broke his leg.

"I shan't give up like this!"

Wrapping his broken leg with willow husk, Yi Sunsin stood up and finished the remaining tests. He failed the exam that day, of course, as he wasn't able to show his genuine ability, but this story surely shows us his bold, resolute demeanor.

Afterwards, Yi Sunsin never gave up and four years later he finally passed the exam. He was thirty-one at the time, and it was sixteen years prior to the Imjin-waeran.

If you come to Asan, come and visit me. There are still lots of stories to be told about Admiral Yi Sunsin.



# The Sad Story of a Woman Who Was Ahead of Her Time

Yeonghoewon in Gwangmyeong

I am the tomb of a member of a royal family.  
But I have a plain appearance so people call me The Baby Tomb.  
The reason that I look like this way is because the owner of the  
tomb, Crown Princess Gang, was a falsely accused traitor.

Do you want to hear a story of a woman  
who was ahead of her time?



Who is lying beneath me is Crown Princess Gang, the wife of Crown Prince Sohyeon and the nineteenth descendant of Gang Gamchan, a Goryeo general known for the Battle of Gwiju. In the Jeongmyo year, when the first invasion occurred, she became the Crown Princess by marrying the eldest son of King Injo, Crown Prince Sohyeon.

*Jeongmyo-horan*, or Later Jin (Qing) Invasion of Joseon

It's the war that Later Jin (Qing) invaded Joseon in 1627. Joseon was defenseless to the sudden attack of Later Jin. At the end of the war, Joseon made ties with Later Jin as brotherly country.

Though the prior king of Joseon, Gwanghae, chose the diplomatic balance between Ming and Later Jin, Injo considered Later Jin as a barbaric tribe and showed no respect and stayed loyal to Ming. So, Making ties as brothers with Later Jin was a very humiliating result to Joseon.

In the aftermath of the invasion Qing forced Joseon to pledge that it would be a brother nation to the Qing Dynasty. But, Qing later changed the terms and demanded Joseon to treat it as a sovereign authority. When Joseon refused this, Qing invaded Joseon again; and we call this war *Byeongja-horan*. After the war, the Crown Prince and Princess were taken to Qing as hostages.

*Byeongja-horan*, or Qing Invasion of Joseon

Later Jin, in 1636, changed its name to Qing and invaded Joseon once again. This war is called *Byeongja-horan*.

In this war, it only took six days for Qing to take over the Capital, Hanyang. Even King Injo was besieged by the enemy while taking refuge. Joseon was made to serve Qing as sovereign tributary overlord at the end of the war, and this disgraceful result was worse than that of the last invasion.

When they first arrived, they needed to make a living in Qing for



themselves. And when the news spread, the other captives from Joseon visited and cried for help before them.

"I think we should make money while we are here," The Crown Princess Gang said with a stern face.

"What are you saying? How can a crown princess of a country seek to do such a vulgar thing as making money?" Crown Prince Sohyeon asked her in surprise.

"I can't stand the pitiful sight of Joseon people taken to this place. And we need money to save them."

"You have such thoughtful intentions. As you're considering things I haven't thought about; you make me feel humbled. I thank you, my wife."

The prince held her hands tight.

"How about bringing items from Joseon and selling them to the nobles in Qing? Since this place lacks fine goods, we can surely make a lot of money."

"Alright. I'll gladly help you."

Crown Princess Gang brought things like medicinal herbs, cotton cloth, and tobacco from Joseon and began to sell them. The good quality of the items from Joseon soon became famous and she could make a lot of money. This stabilized the livelihood of the couple and their company of about two hundred members.

Afterwards, they also engaged in farming and sold the products in Qing. At the time, the people of Qing, who used to live a nomadic lifestyle, were not well-informed on crop cultivation. So, good quality items produced by the Prince and Princess were naturally very popular.

The couple also kept good relationships with the officials of Qing. As the friendship strengthened, they started to save the captives of Joseon with the money they had earned.

"You had better stay with us now. We'll figure out a way to go back

to our land someday.”

The common people of Joseon, who had been taken to Qing and had lived terrible lives, could finally be freed from slavery thanks to the Crown Prince and Princess. They trusted the couple and worked even harder for them. Therefore, their lives in Qing got better and better.

Crown Princess Gang helped the Crown Prince to attend Qing’s national events or even government meetings where the Emperor and high ministers gathered. Besides that, she hosted her own feasts and invited the ministers of Qing. She did this because she thought making friendly relationships with Qing was more important than anything. Qing did not belittle or neglect the couple, either. Though they were held hostage, they were still free to go out and meet people.

Also, Sim-gwan, the building where the couple and their party resided, played a considerable role as an intermediary between them and Joseon. Sim-gwan was an institution like today’s embassies that dealt with taxation, tributary payment, and captives. Wanting to purchase items from Joseon, the merchants of Qing crowded the place. At that time, Crown Prince Sohyen and Crown Princess Gang were at the very center of the trade between Qing and Joseon.

In those days, Qing was putting every effort to destroy Ming and achieve unification on the Chinese continent. So, it was important for them to keep friendly, stable relations with Joseon. By leveraging the royal couple, Qing was trying to obtain the aid from Joseon.

Eventually, Qing won the ultimate victory against Ming, and they didn’t need to keep holding Joseon’s Crown Prince and Princess any longer. A hope was opened for the couple to find their way back to Joseon.

The Prince and Princess witnessed Qing’s strength shattering the Ming Dynasty with their own eyes, and they realized that the power was coming from their advanced civilization. They also had an interest in the

Western culture. Becoming acquainted with a German missionary, Johann Adam Schall von Bell, they came to know about Western science and Catholicism, and they thought they should introduce this new culture to Joseon. They believed that they could strengthen their national power with openness and reformation.

However, King Injo and the ministers in Joseon, had the opposite attitude. They could never forget the humiliating moment they had to face at Samjeondo. But now, their Crown Prince, who had been a hostage in Qing, came back with lots of valuables. King Injo did not like this one bit and became rather furious at the sight. His son looked far from having had a hard life in Qing, and Sohyeon's opinion that Joseon should have a friendly relationship with Qing sounded like a total absurdity.

*Humiliation at Samjeondo*

Samjeondo was the name of a ferry point that used to be at today's Samjeondong area in Songpagu, Seoul. Defeated in the war in the Beongja year, King Injo knelt before the Emperor of Qing, Hong Taiji, and pledged his fealty at this place. What's more, the Emperor ordered Joseon to build up the monument in honor of his great virtues. This dishonorable event is called *Humiliation at Samjeondo*.

In fact, King Injo heard a rumor that Qing was going to take him hostage and seat Crown Prince Sohyeon on the throne of Joseon. So, his son's coming home wasn't exactly welcoming news to him.

"How can you compromise with Qing, forgetting what they did to us? Do you think all these fineries could buy you the seat on the throne?"

The King hurled the gifts that the prince brought from Qing. Maybe it was because of the cold, scornful attitudes of his father and the court? Three months later, Crown Prince Sohyeon died of a disease.

After the prince's sudden death, something suspicious happened again. This time, King Injo became ill after he had a meal, which was the

product of poison in the food. The king accused Crown Princess Gang of the act.

Injo regarded his brilliant daughter-in-law as a thorn in his side. He thought that she threatened his position. Eventually, Crown Princess Gang, falsely accused, was sentenced to death. Moreover, her family was destroyed in the process. The king exiled the children of the Crown Prince and Princess, his own grandchildren, to Jejudo island.

Even after her wrongful death, Crown Princess Gang could not be buried as a member in the royal tomb. This false charge of treason was removed posthumously during King Sukjong's reign, seventy years later. And her tomb got its name, "Yeongheowon" under the twenty-sixth king of Joseon, King Gojong.

Until recently, I was a weedy tomb without anyone to take care of me. But, in 2013, the government decided keep me maintained.

I only hope that you can see Crown Princess Gang as she really was. Not only was she a wise wife, but she was a gracious mother to all the prisoners taken to Qing. She was also a great leader who could turn the crisis before her into a golden opportunity.

## Chapter3

### Tombs of Kings Who Dreamt of Peaceful Kingdoms

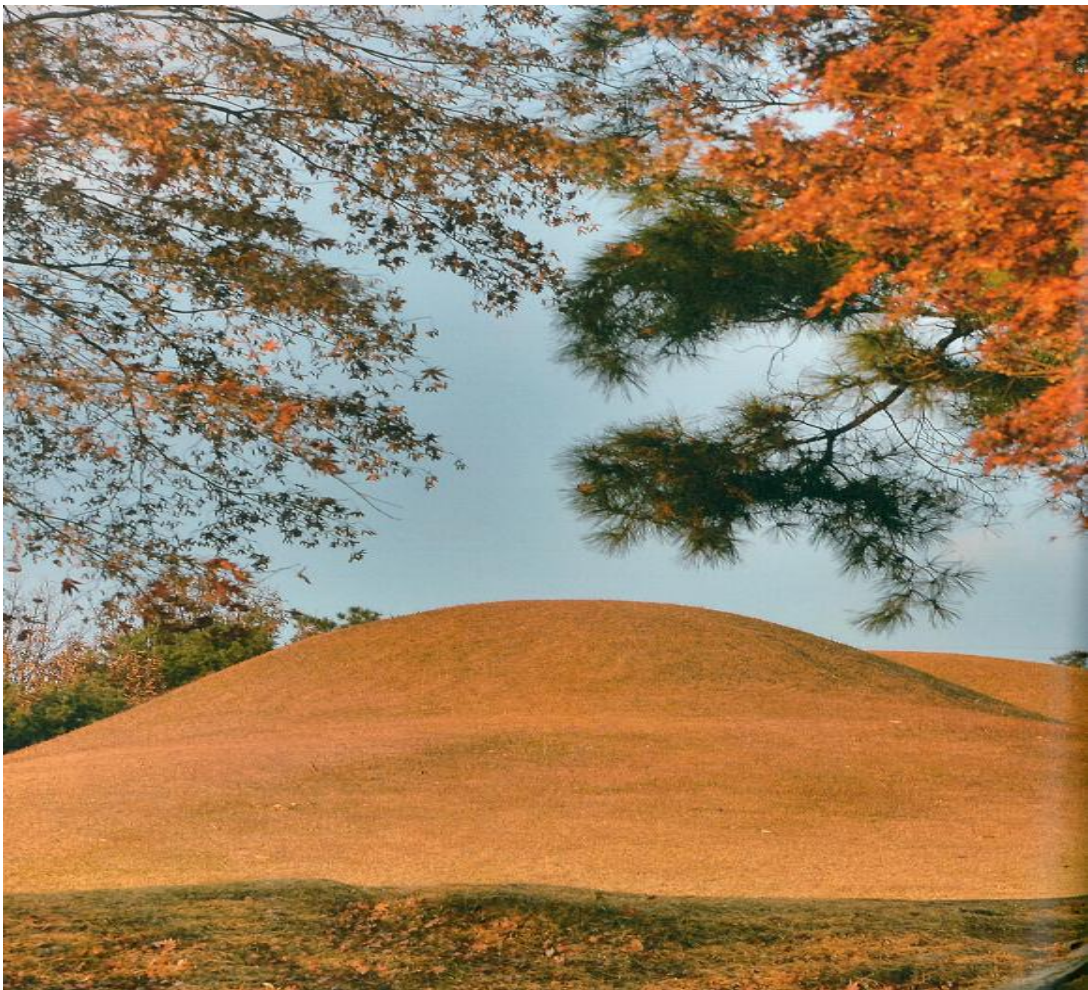
# The King Who Recovered the Glory of Baekje

## Tomb of King Mu-ryeong

I am the tomb of King Mu-ryeong of Baekje.

The whole nation were excited when I was found.  
That's because finding me meant that the fifteen-hundred year  
old secret of Baekjae could be finally brought to light.

If you come to see me,  
I can tell you more stories of King Mu-ryeong.



*Mmm...What's that noise?*

The noise of people from outside penetrated the earth. It startled me, waking me up after a long sleep. The noise came closer and closer. Then, the earth surrounding me started to move. Finally, a portal to the world opened up. Entering my chamber, people couldn't hide their excitement.

"My god, we found a tomb of Baekje!"

"This is the tomb of King Sama. That means, we've found the tomb of King Mu-ryeong!"

#### Songsanri Tumuli

Along with Neungsanri Tumuli, this is the place where tombs of Baekje kings gather together. There are seven kings' tombs including King Mu-ryeong's, but his tomb is the only one whose owner was exactly revealed. Tombs from No.1 to No.5 have stone chambers with domes and Tomb No.6 and Tomb of King Mu-ryeong were made of bricks, which are historically important to learn about Baekje's burial style.

A long, long time ago, in 525, today's Gongju was the Capital of Baekje, "Woongjin." The 25th king, Mu-ryeong passed away and the line of people mourning the king's death seemed endless. Every person in the funeral was weeping in grief.

"Please, gracious King, protect our country from above."

"We owe our fortunate lives to you. we can't thank you more."

King Mu-ryeong was a kindhearted king who always cared for his subjects. The commoners and officials both loved their king, so they decided to make the best tomb for him to honor his legacy. All of the famous craftsmen in Baekje gathered to make me.

They made the chamber of the tomb with bricks, where they put the coffins for the king and the queen. Then they filled up the tomb with precious goods so that the king's soul could live comfortably in the afterlife. That's how I, the tomb of King Mu-ryeong, was made. From that point, the



door to the surface had been tightly sealed.

Then, on a summer's day, after about fifteen hundred years, the door was suddenly opened. How they found me was also very funny. They stumbled across the gate of the royal tomb while they were working on a nearby drainage system. Before me, other tombs had been illegally excavated, so there was no way to find out whose tombs they were. I felt pretty proud to hear that I was the first royal tomb of Baekje that was discovered in such pristine condition. So, in a way, it was understandable for all those people to buzz with such excitement.

Discovery of the tomb of King Mu-ryeong

In July, 1971, during a drainage work on Songsanri Tumuli, the entrance of a royal tomb was revealed. This was the discovery of King Mu-ryeong's tumulus. The artifacts from the tomb were a great help to learn and study the history of Baekje and the history of Korean art.

When King Mu-ryeong became king, Baekje was in chaos from having lost the Han River area to Goguryeo. Furthermore, the lives of Baekje people became more and more miserable because of a pandemic and food shortage. King Mu-ryeong, firstly, looked after what people needed most in their lives.

He opened the kingdom's granary for the starving people, and he cultivated wastelands for people who had drifted due to the lack of adequate farmland. Most notably, he made the new reservoirs around the country and repaired the levees around rice paddies so that the damage of floods or droughts could be reduced. More stable conditions for cultivation meant better lives for the people, and it led to an overall increase of the kingdom's wealth.

He also put forth efforts to improve laws and administration. He entrusted a person with a task according to his ability, not his noble birth.

Secondly, he changed the position of that person every three years in order to prevent him from having too much power. Also, he made laws and systems for the central government to manage the administration of the local areas so that the local nobility could not exploit the common people.

"Does this make any sense to you? We are highborns, the noble blood of this country!"

"Don't be so angry. It may look like we're losing what we have, but in the long run, it is to our advantage when the kingdom becomes more prosperous."

The nobility, who had been against the new policies, soon complied with King Mu-ryeong.

King Mu-ryeong, who already understood the importance of trade between countries, reopened the seaway that was once surrendered to Goguryeo. Through this route, he was able to grant active trade with Liang, on the Chinese continent, and also with Japan. Baekje not only traded goods with them, but also sent learned men to spread their culture. At the time, envoys of Baekje were almost like heroes in Japan.

Most of all, King Mu-ryeong put every effort to recover the old Capital (Hanseong), in The Han River area, which had been misappropriated by Goguryeo. Giving Whandudaedo, which was a sword with a ringed pommel, to General Sao, he said,

"Getting Hanseong back is getting glory back to our kingdom."

General Sao pledged to King Mu-ryeong that he would bring victory for him and, with much vigor, immediately marched to Hanseong. Supporting General Sao, people in Baekje exuberantly cheered the general. They all were of one accord and prayed for the recovery of Hanseong.

King Mu-ryeong went to Hanseong for himself and met the people living there.

"Because of your grace, Baekje will return to glory!"

"Hurrah! Hurrah for the kingdom!"

Wherever King Mu-ryeong went, people followed on his heels and cried cheers for the king.

However, King Mu-ryeong was never able to see those in Hanseong again. A few months after his return to Woongjin, he passed away.

Henceforth, the legacy he left, while ruling Baekje for twenty-three years, continued to be talked about by many people. Well, people continue to do that even today, after one thousand five hundred years.

You will find out more about King Mu-ryeong when you come to see me; from his warm-heartedness for the people to his wise and brave constitution for the country.

## Queen that Overcame Crisis with Wisdom

### The Tomb of Queen Seondeok in Gyeongju

I am a very special tomb.

Because I was made in heaven.

How do they make a tomb in heaven?

It's all thanks to my owner, Queen Seondeok's, wisdom.

If you want to know how it was possible,

listen carefully to my story.



### Silla's First Queen

In Silla, there was a unique social status system called "Golpumje". Among the classes divided by one's blood line, Seong-gol and Jingol were royalty and nobility, respectively. And only a male Seong-gol whose parents were both from Seong-gol family could be a king.

When there was no male heir from Seong-gol family, a female Seong-gol could succeed the throne. Queen Seondeok was Silla's twenty-seventh monarch, the first queen in our history.

Queen Seondeok, the first female monarch in our history, laid the foundation for Silla's unification of the Three Kingdoms. Even though she was a woman, she confidently confronted opposing forces in Silla and threats from foreign powers. Her brilliant and wise mind went a long way in making this happen.

She left in her will that she should be buried in Doricheon when she died. Doricheon is one of the heavens where Buddha lives. But, was it even possible to make a tomb in the realm of Buddha?

"My Queen, by what means can we make a tomb in Doricheon when none of us can go there?"

"So blind of you to not to see how close it is!"

"What do you mean? Where in the world could this place be?"

"It's right there, atop of Nangsan mountain."

Even with the queen's answer, her vassals were extremely confused. Besides that, she predicted the day of her own death and they couldn't help but to be at a loss for action.

On the day she had predicted, Queen Seondeok did, in fact, pass away. According to her will, people made her tomb at the top of Nangsan mountain. Until then, I was just a tomb at the top of a mountain. But, about thirty years later, her mysterious riddle became clear when King Munmu built a temple named Sacheonwangsa on the mountain.

Sacheonwang means "a deity who lives in the heaven called Sawangcheon." Sawangcheon is the heaven located right beneath Doricheon. So, Building Sacheonwangsa temple in the middle of Nangsan mountain would make Queen Seondeok's mountain-top tomb placed above Sawangcheon, just like Doricheon. Finally, her vassals could understand what their queen's will really meant.

There's another story telling us about her amazing wisdom. At the time, Silla went through unstable circumstances due to the frequent invasions of the neighboring countries, Goguryeo and Baekje. Outside the Korean Peninsula, Emperor Taizong's Tang Dynasty was growing in power.

Queen Seondeok thought that Silla needed help from Tang in order to escape the threat of Goguryeo. So, she ordered ministers and students to Tang to open trade, and to learn about Tang's civilization.

"Your Majesty, the Emperor sent you a gift."

"Right, it's the gift from the Emperor himself. How gracious he is!"

The Queen's ministers all were overjoyed to see the emperor's present, a painting of a peony blossom and seeds of the plant. However, the Queen was just gazing at the painting.

"What's the good of planting the seed? There will be no fragrance even if in bloom."

"A flower with no scent?"

Her ministers wondered why the queen wasn't so happy with the gift.

"Look at the painting. Since there are no butterflies around the flower, it has no scent. The Emperor sent me this to mock me. He's saying that I am the scentless flower that doesn't attract any butterflies."

The truth is that Emperor Taizong found Queen Seondeok unworthy just because she was a woman. He even showed his intention to replace her with another male noble. But, Queen Seondeok endured the disrespectful



treatment of the Emperor. Securing her country was more important than keeping her pride.



Another anecdote, that tells us about her wisdom, is related to the place called Okmunji. Around the pond, named Okmunji, frogs gathered up and croaked for about three to four days. What made it more strange was it happened in the middle of winter. Witnessing such a peculiar sight, people reported it to the Queen.

"Their fierce looks are an omen of a coming war. Draft two thousand well-trained soldiers and go west. You will find enemies hiding in the valley called Yeo-geun-gok. Capture all of them."

As she had said, The Silla army found five hundred Baekje soldiers hiding in that exact place. Silla narrowly prevented the surprise attack from the enemy state.



Even today, you can see Queen Seondeok's extraordinariness for yourself if you visit Gyeongju. Cheomseongdae, known as the oldest observatory in the Asia, is one of the most famous artifacts made during the reign of Queen Seondeok.

In those days, people believed the sky had dreadful power and they looked up at it with great awe. If the country went through a heavy rain or a drought, they considered it as wrath from above.

But, Queen Seondeok tried to study it rather than fear it. For astronomical observation, she built Cheomseongdae and studied the shapes of the stars and the moon. Then, she used the information to divide a year into twenty-four terms, which made it possible to know the right times to plough.

Although Queen Seondeok's abilities were exemplary in so many areas, her life as queen wasn't so easy. She had to confront the constant threats of Goguryeo and Baekje, and she also had to go through Tang's political interventions and veiled disrespect.

Luckily, she had a capable general like Kim Yusin by her side, but the invasions from the outside and riots from the inside didn't allow her to let her guard down until the last day of her life.

Who knows? Maybe she wanted to be buried in Doricheon because she wished to find Buddha's peace in the afterlife.

Give her words of comfort when you visit me. And tell her that she may rest peacefully in the Buddhist realms now.

# I Will be the Dragon of Our Sea and Guard Silla Forever

Sea Tomb of Munmu the Great in Gyeongju

I am the tomb of King Munmu guarding the East Sea.  
I have something to say, on behalf of King Munmu, to Japan,  
which is trying to take Dokdo and the East Sea.  
"Munmu the Great, who became a dragon in the sea,  
will protect Korea!"



King Munmu succeeded the crown, after his father King Taejong Muyeol, the thirtieth king of Silla. After succeeding to the throne, he continued warring to achieve his father's unfinished work, the unification of the Three Kingdoms. In 660, Silla joined hands with Tang and destroyed Baekje. Even Goguryeo lost the war surrendering to Silla in 668 and Silla could take another step toward unification.

However, after Goguryeo was destroyed, Tang broke its promises with Silla and showed its ambition to devour the entire Korean Peninsula. Soon thereafter, Silla joined forces with the Goguryeo resistance group. It was not until 676 that Silla expelled Tang, completing the task of unification.

#### Unification of Three Kingdoms by Silla

Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla, though sharing the same ethnic origin, were situated at different areas on the Korean Peninsula and respectively built their own countries with different cultural characteristics. But, all three desired to conquer two other kingdoms and built a united kingdom. So, they had numerous battles to achieve unification.

It was Silla that made that dream come true. Silla seized the opportunity to join hands with Tang while Baekje and Goguryeo was going through the inward confusion, and, together with Tang, Silla destroyed the two kingdoms. Tang, the partner in the victory, later tried to devour Silla. but Silla finally drove Tang away from the Korean Peninsula and, in effect, became the united kingdom.

#### The Silla-Tang War

This is the seven-year-long war between Silla and Tang, beginning in the tenth year of King Munmu's reign, in which Silla expelled Tang that tried to take over Silla's unified territory.

King Munmu who acknowledged that Silla wasn't strong enough to stand alone against Tang joined forces with the Goguryeo resistance army. The Goguryeo resistance army was actively engaged in the war, more than just a helping participant. The Silla-Tang alliance destroyed Goguryeo, nevertheless, when it came to war between Silla and Tang, it chose to be on the side of Silla, which, after all, shared the same roots ethnically.

After the unification, King Munmu devoted himself to managing the extended territory as well as the lives of its people. He also built up a system suitable for the unified kingdom, with which he carried out just ruling, and strengthened the royal authority by making the nobility submissive to it.

Above all, it was paramount to him to take care of the people, weary and exhausted from years of warfare. As the war of the Three Kingdoms prolonged, people's farmlands were destroyed and subjects began to starve. King Munmu permitted people to melt down the arms used in the war to repurpose them as farming tools, and he lowered taxes so that people could raise their households up again.

Notably, King Munmu never ignored a chance to get closer to his people and listen to the voice of them. And, one day, he heard some shocking news.

At the time, Silla was too preoccupied in the war against Tang, descending from North, to fully watch over the southern part of the kingdom. The Japanese pirates took advantage of this by raiding the area whenever they could. People living in those areas suffered from considerable ordeals.

"Buddha will protect my people."

Praying to Buddha for his country's protection from the Japanese pirates from across the sea, King Munmu ordered the construction of a seaside temple looking out over the East Sea. Unfortunately, however, he died before the temple was even completed.

King Munmu who worried about his kingdom and its people even while on his deathbed left a very unusual will.

"I will become a dragon in the sea and protect Silla forever. Bury me in the East Sea when I'm gone."

His successor, King Sinmun, made an underwater tomb according to his father's will. Well, I am not actually a sunken tomb on the bottom of the

sea.

In fact, a Buddhist funeral was very common and, as is custom, when someone died, people cremated the remains of the dead. So King Munmu was cremated at Nangsan Mountain which people considered a sacred hill. Afterwards, his ashes were scattered over Daewangam (the Rock of the Great King) in the sea East of Gyeongju.



King Sinmun then completed his father's task of building the temple and named it Gameunsa Temple, which means "gratitude for King Munmu's graces." Whenever he missed his father, he visited Gameunsa Temple. One day, while there, he heard a mysterious rumor.

"In the eastern sea, an islet sprang up, and it looks like a turtle."

"Besides, there's a strange bamboo on the islet that parts in two in the daylight and joins back together in the moonlight."



Hearing the rumor, the king called in a fortuneteller.

"Your father, the late king who became a dragon in the sea, and General Kim Yusin, who became a god in the sky, are going to give Your Majesty a great gift."

Following the words of the fortuneteller, King Sinmun went out to sea. Upon arriving at the islet, a big dragon actually appear, and it gave him a belt made of black beads. The king, receiving the gift, asked,

"Why does that bamboo on the islet part and then join back together?"

"It's the same reason that you need two hands to make a clapping sound. This bamboo, divided into two, should join back together to create a sound, and it means you can rule the whole country with a tune. If you make a flute with this bamboo here, you can bring peace to this world."





Overjoyed, King Sinmun made a flute out of the bamboo. As the dragon said to him, every time he blew the flute, concerns in his kingdom disappeared; it dispelled the diseases plaguing people, thwarted foreign invasion, poured rain in droughts, ceased rains when there were floods. The music even tamed the wild waves in the sea.

People called this flute Manpasikjeok, which means the flute that calms the sea. King Sinmun, who obtained Manpasikjeok, led Silla wisely and brought the kingdom great stability and prosperity.

#### Manpasikjeok

It's a flute in the legend of Silla. The story about this instrument is written both in *Samgukyusa*, Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms, and in *Samguksagi*, History of the Three Kingdoms. It's told that blowing this flute makes all the troubles in the kingdom go away, for example, dispelling an enemy and curing illnesses.

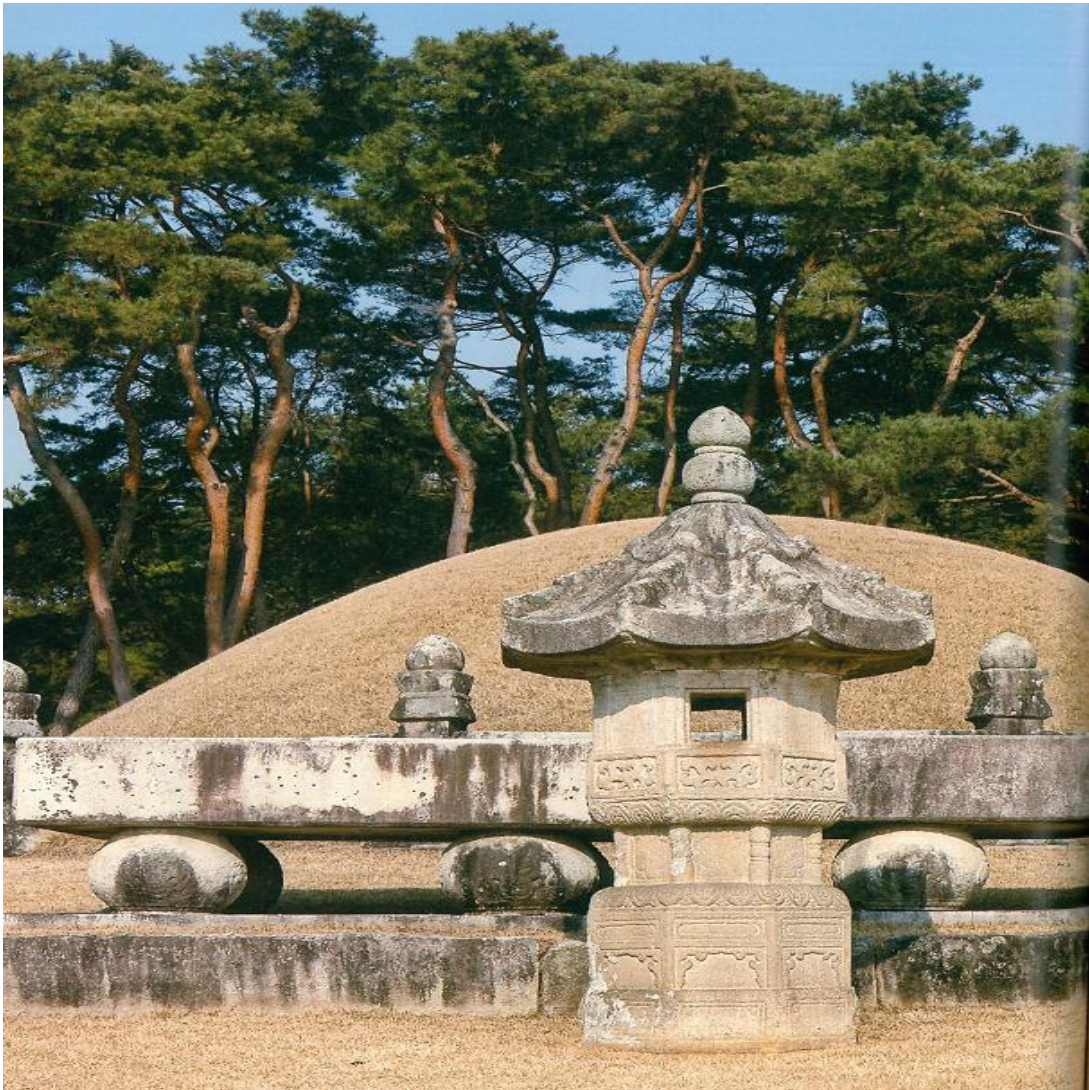
By the way, do you think King Munmu was really reborn as a dragon that told King Sinmun about the magic flute? Well, no one knows.

But one irrefutable truth in the story is that the son desperately desired to protect his kingdom by following his father's desires to make the kingdom peaceful. Isn't it enough to know how dedicated these two kings were to their country? Because an honest heart has the power to exceed all others.

## King's Stubborn Love for His People

Sejong the Great's Yeong-reung

I am the tomb of Sejong the Great.  
King Sejong is one of the most famous kings in The Joseon  
Dynasty.  
But, there are many stories unknown about King Sejong.  
Why don't we follow the traces of those hidden stories.



Did you know that the royal tombs of the kings and queens of the Joseon Dynasty are valuable cultural heritages of the world, which all the humanity should protect and cherish? In 2009, the royal tombs of Joseon were designated as the World Heritage sites by UNESCO.

It is all the more impressive that all forty units, except for the tombs in North Korea, were designated at one time. All over the world you cannot find an example like the Joseon royal tombs, where all of the tombs of the kings and queens of one dynasty with more than five hundred years' of history behind them survived in such good condition.

Among those tombs, I, the tomb of Sejong the Great, have a very special story. Actually I was moved from my initial location to where I currently am today. Owing to King Sejong's stubbornness, his burial site was eventually altered after his death.

I was initially right next to Heonreung, where King Sejong's father, Taejong was laid to rest. King Sejong, who had been filial to his father since a young child, said he wanted to be buried near his father when he was dead. He did that because of his sincere commitment to keep his filial duty and be by his father's side.

Therefore, when Queen Soheon died before King Sejong, he ordered to make her tomb at the site next to Heonreung. But, when the earth was dug up, the area was all wet with water making a muddy pit. The whole court presented the king with petitions arguing that it was not the right place for a royal burial; however, they failed to break King Sejong's will to keep his place beside his father.

Four years later, King Sejong died and was laid down in the same tomb beside his queen. Actually, I am the first tomb in Joseon's history in which the king and queen are buried together in the same mound.

But, was it because of the water within me as the king's vassals had said? The royal court, after Sejong the Great, had to go through a most

unfortunate series of in succession events. And the rumor ran that it was all because I was placed at the wrong site.

Even though he desired to stay near him dearly, after eighteen years, King Sejong was removed from his father's side. I was moved to this sunny spot in Yeosu, Gyeong-gido Province at King Yejong's command.

As you can see in the story about his tomb site, King Sejong was an obstinate man. Perhaps, it was his mulish nature that enabled him to achieve such numerous accomplishments.

There was one thing in particular that no one was able to stop him from doing. That is, caring for the people in his kingdom. King Sejong never forgot, for a second, that the root of his kingdom was the common people. He always cared about their lives and tried to think in their shoes.

Most prominently, He took decisive and active steps to come up with the proper measures concerning taxation, which had direct linkage to the livelihoods of the people. Firstly, King Sejong conducted a nationwide survey to collect the opinions of people in the kingdom, including commoners, on the issue over period of five months. Based on the results, the king made a tax system in which tax should be imposed according to law, not according to a king's dictation.

At the time, people paid tax with part of their yearly harvest. King Sejong set up the standards based on the fertility of the soil and the level of the year's harvest to estimate the amount collected.

**Reform on land tax, Nine Harvest-based Grades, and Six Fertility-based Grades**

For imposing more impartial tax on every region, King Sejong enacted the new land tax system. Land tax is a kind of national tax imposed to people possessing lands.

Nine Harvest-based Grades categorized farming lands into nine according to the year's good and bad harvests, and Six Fertility-based Grades divided them into six levels according to the fertility of the lands so that the government should apply differential

standards to estimating tax.

King Sejong working tirelessly, day and night, to take care of people's lives and to listen carefully to their voices, reached the conclusion that his people needed written characters that they could easily learn and use. At the end of a long effort, King Sejong produced the Korean Alphabet, Han-geul, which was one of his greatest, if not the greatest, legacies.

"I'm going to make easy letters for my people."

Some of his ministers were opposed to King Sejong's idea. Nevertheless, he refused to yield. He continued working on making the new letters with young scholars from Jip-heonjeon, the Hall of Scholars, who followed his will.

Jip-hyeonjeon was a royal institution of research. Many scholars there helped the king in studying confucian ideas, scientific technologies, and laying the foundation to improve laws and systems. King Sejong constantly improved Jip-hyeonjeon by gathering up the greatest and most talented minds.

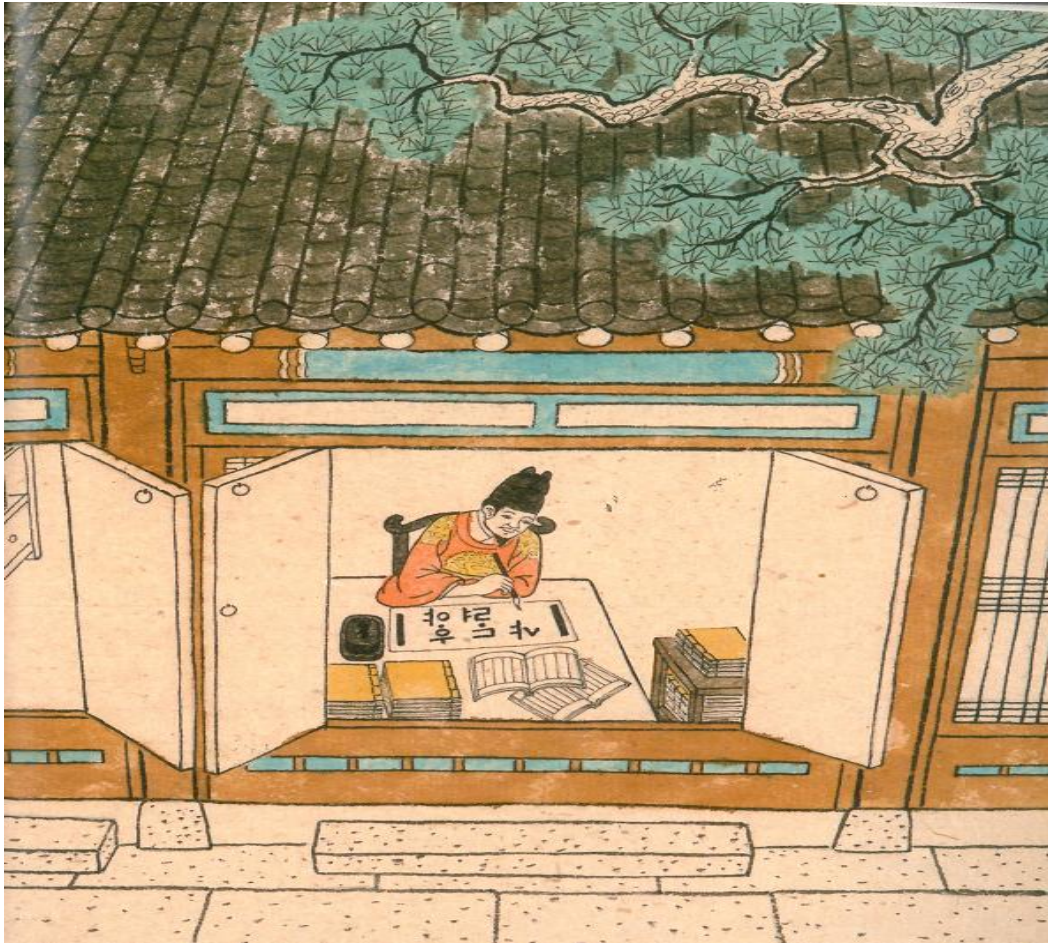
#### King Sejong and Jipheonjeon

King Sejong showed a great, special love for the scholars in Jip-heonjeon. In order for them to pursue their learning and studying, the king supported them in every way.

Thanks to King Sejong's support and studies done by Jip-hyeonjeon, many great inventions were made such as Cheug-ugi, the first rain gauge in the world, Ang-bu-ilgu, the sundial, and Ja-gyeong-nu, the automatic water clock, which stepped up the scientific technology of Joseon.

Finally, in 1443, the twenty-fifth year of his reign, Han-geul was completed. The initial name of Han-geul was Hunminjeong-eum, which means "the proper sounds for instructing the people."





After three years, King Sejong published it along with a manual titled Hunminjeongeum Haerye. This explains how to use the letters as well as the principles and theories behind the script in detail. In the preface, the king clarified the motive of the invention:

“The language of our kingdom is different from that of China, and it cannot be fully written or expressed in Chinese characters.

Thus, the ignorant people cannot state what they wish to mean in Chinese characters.

Saddened by this, I made a new set of twenty-eight letters and it is my wish that all of my subjects may learn them and use them for their convenience.”



What if King Sejong had yielded his will to the counselors' opposition and given up on Han-geul? What kind of script would we use?

*Ga, Na, Da, Ra, Ma, Ba, Sa..*

We might have to learn and memorize complicated Chinese letters, not Han-geul which we can easily write and use as sounds for our language.

If you visit me someday, take your time to thank the relentless Sejong the Great for his numerous legacies. And don't forget to thank the illustrious and benevolent King for bearing such abundant love for the people and for enabling us to express our language in the finest script in the world.

## Chapter4

# Tombs of Patriots who Cried for the Sovereignty of the Country

# Only if We Can Have Our Country Back

## The Tombs of Three Martyrs

We are the tombs of patriots  
who laid down their lives for Korea's independence.

“For our independence!”

It's as if their voices were thundering near us.



The leader of the Korean Provisional Government, Kim Gu, realized there was a need to carry out different kinds of operations, in order to demoralize Japan, which had already seized and exerted control over the Manchuria region of China. He intended to organize the Korean Patriotic Corps to assassinate major Japanese officials.

#### Korean Patriotic Corps

In Shanghai, China, in April of 1919, the Korean Provisional Government was organized for the independence of Korea. This government was at the center of The Japanese Resistance Movement until Korea was finally liberated.

It also carried out various missions by creating The Korean Patriotic Corps, an anti-Japanese, Black Operations group. The group engaged in assassinating high ranking officials of the Japanese Empire. It tried to quell, the ambition of Japan's invasion.

One day, a young man traveled all the way to the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai. He revealed the his name was Yi Bongchang, and he also expressed his favorable impression related to the assassination carried out by An Jung-geun. Standing before Kim Gu, Yi Bongchang showed him his fervor for achieving independence for the nation.

“Sir, I have lived thirty-one years. But, even if I was to live another thirty-one years, there’d be no joy in that life. I came here to lay down my life for my country.”

On January 8, 1932, people crowded in front of the police office in Tokyo to observe the celebrations in honor of the visiting Japanese Emperor. Yi Bongchang hid amongst the crowd. Before long, the procession of coaches came in to sight. Yi Bongchang fingered the grenades in his pockets.

“Which one of these is the one carrying the Emperor? Alright, he cannot be in the first coach. It must be the second one!”

Yi Bongchang threw the grenades at the second coach; But, the grenades barely damaged the coach. Furthermore, the Emperor wasn’t even

inside.

The moment he realized he had failed, Japanese officers attacked him; however, he didn't fight back. This was because he had plans to stand before the court, with dignity, and to proudly address them as to why he had committed this act.

“The Japanese Empire robbed us of our sovereignty and have been brutally mistreating our people. I did what I did to kill the Emperor for the independence of my country, not to merely cause a commotion.”

In October of the same year, Yi Bongchang was hanged at Ichikaya prison. After three months passed, Yi Bongchang's attempt to kill the emperor ignited another flame of desire for independence in Shanghai, China. It was April 29th, a occasion to celebrate the Japanese Emperor's birthday. Many high officials of Japan gathered for this ceremonial celebration.

There stood Yun Bong-gil, who was filled with a yearning for Korea's independence in his bosom. Dressed in a suit, he was holding a lunch box and a water canteen; the Korean Flag was hidden in his jacket. In actuality, the lunch box and canteen were both bombs; one was for attacking the event site, and the other was for taking his own life.

Patiently waiting for the right time, Yun Bong-gil finally threw the canteen bomb at the podium. The explosion of the bomb rapidly threw the entire place into utter chaos. As Japanese officers jumped at him, he struggled to resist, crying out this sole phrase as loud as he could.

“Independence! Independence for Korea!”

The bomb Yun Bong-gil had thrown killed the commander of the Japanese army and injured the Japanese Diplomatic Minister's leg. Other high officials were inflicted with both serious and minor injuries.

Arrested on the spot, Yun Bong-gil was transferred to Japan and imprisoned in Kanajawa prison in Osaka. Later on December 19th of the same year, he died in jail.

Like Yun Bong-gil, there was another young man who was to carry out a similar attack at the celebration site for the Emperor's birthday in Shanghai. His name was Baek Jeong-gi.

Having witnessed The March First Independence Movement in Seoul, he returned to his hometown and carried out a similar demonstration there. Later, he took refuge in Manchuria and participated in the independence movement. When he moved to Beijing he engaged in anarchistic activities influenced by another activist, Sin Chaeho.

#### March First Independence Movement

This is one of the independence movements in Korea that occurred on March 1 in 1919. As is widely known, the outset of this movement was an assembly of people at Tapgol Park. This was a non-violent, peaceful demonstration under the principle of the National Self-determination. Since the year that The March First Independence Movement occurred was Gimi year, it's also known as The Gimi Independence Movement, or Gimi Independence Demonstration.

To execute his attack, Baek Jeong-gi slipped into a banquet hall that was filled with Japanese ambassadors and military officers. However, due to a betrayal from a fellow operative, who was spying on the Japanese, he was arrested before he could take any kind of action whatsoever. In fact, Japanese police and soldiers, disguised as rickshaw men and employees of the feast, were already waiting for the moment he would make a move.

Baek Jeong-gi, who was taken to Japan, was sentenced to life and imprisoned in Nagasaki prison. He, like many martyrs before him, ended his young life in prison.

On August 15, 1945, Korea was liberated after thirty-five long years of Japanese Colonization. The remains of the three martyrs, who regrettably lost their lives, were buried side-by-side here in Hyochang Park.



*I don't expect I will be alive after another couple of months.  
Alas, my fellowmen, Try not to be discouraged by my death.  
Even if I am dead, these ideals will live on forever,  
and you will see the day when they bear fruit.  
Brothers, take care of yourselves and after you get out of this prison,  
keep on striving for the independence and honor of our country  
just as your hearts crave it in this moment.  
My only guilt and regret in life  
is that I cannot fulfill my duty, as a child, to my elderly mother.  
If the day of independence comes,  
please take my remains and bury them  
in the ground anywhere in my free country,  
and lay a rose of Sharon on my grave.*

These words are written in the epitaph on Baek Jeong-gi's grave which were the last words he left with his fellow members before he died.

If you come visit us, read the words out loud. And, like his final words request, lay a Rose of Sharon upon me. Close your eyes, pay respects to the martyred souls, and remind yourself to remember their yearful cries.

“Korea is an independent country. Hurray for Korea!”

# Tragic Deaths of Ordinary Soldiers, Unknown

## Seoul National Cemetery

I am The National Cemetery, the place for souls who fought and  
died for this country.

I contain the tragic memories of the war where one race, divided  
into South and North, pointed guns at each other.

I hope there will never again be a dismal war, like this,  
on these lands.



### Korean War (June 25th War)

This war broke out as the North Korean army made a sudden attack over the 38th parallel on June 25th, 1950. An armistice agreement was signed on July 27th, 1953, and a line was drawn, between the North and South, that continues today.

It was dawn on June 25th, 1950 and everyone was asleep. The earth rumbled with the sounds of tanks crossing the 38th parallel. So begins the Korean War that is more familiar to us by the name the June 25th War.

“No need to worry at all since the national army is protecting Seoul perfectly. You’ll hear the news that our army takes Pyeong-yang in a few days, so don’t worry about the current situation.”

Contrary to what the radio said, the then-President, Yi Seungman, hurried to get himself out of Seoul. But, it was not until the North Korean military marched straight into Seoul that citizens began taking refuge from the army.





To make matters worse, the Han River Bridge, the only way from Seoul to the south, was blown up. Hundreds of people crossing the bridge fell into the Han River with the wreckage. It was the South Korean army's decision to blow up the bridge; even if it was to stop the North Korean army from descending further, the decision was an irresponsible one, risking many citizens' lives.

#### The United Nations and The United Nations Security Council

The United Nations is the international peace organization born after the Second World War. It leads international relations in a peaceful way and strives for the happiness of all mankind.

The United Nations Security Council under this organization is responsible for securing international peace and safety.

The United States, having received the news of the Korean War, called the United Nations Security Council into session and argued for the dispatch of the United Nations troops in Korea. But, as sending the army to Korea could result in a bigger war for the world, the international society was hovering on the brink of a decision.

In the meantime, the North Korean army took all the areas of the southern part of South Korea except for Gyeongsangdo Province. The President of South Korea, having fled out of Seoul while citizens left in the city, handed the Wartime Operation Control of South Korea's armed forces over to the United States. Since then, the South Korean army has been under the United States army's control during wartime.

#### The Korean War and The UN's Participation in the War

Hearing the news of the Korean War, the United States convened with the UN Security Council and proposed that the UN send its army to the Korean Peninsula.

Concerned about the possibility of the war expanding, some countries disagreed with the

idea; but, the UN army eventually comprised an armies of sixteen countries, including the U. S., the U. K., and France. As the UN army, led by General MacArthur, won the Battle of Incheon, the North Korean army's southerly movement was hindered.

On September 15th, the Battle of Incheon (or Operation Chromite) led by the UN Commander, General Douglas MacArthur, was successful; the tide of war turned. After three days, the army recovered Seoul and flew the Tae-geukgi (the national flag of South Korea) over the Capital building. In high spirits, the joined forces of South Korea and the United Nations advanced northward to the Yalu River.

As the circumstances turned against North Korea, they asked China for help. China's army, entering the war, again shifted the balance of power. On January 4th, 1951, Seoul was retaken by the North once more and the forces of the UN and South Korea were forced to retreat to the south. This is what we now call the January 4th Retreat. North Korean people migrating to the south began to mix unsystematically with the citizens of Seoul who were fleeing in the same direction. It bred many refugees and separated families.

Afterwards, neck-and-neck battles between the two sides continued pushing back and forth across the 38th parallel. It was almost impossible to count how many soldiers and innocent people died. The talks about a truce were on the table, but the battles didn't stop. Even if a truce was possible, both sides wanted to first seize the upper hand.

Ultimately, the long negotiations, that had dragged on for 861 days, ended as both sides agreed to a truce on July 27th, 1953; this ended a three-year-long period fighting on the Korean Peninsula.

However, it does not mean the war is completely over. Like the word "truce" implies, the war has stopped for the time being. And the scars of the war still remain today.

### The Armistice Agreement of the Korean War

Beginning June 25th, 1950, the war dragged on for three years; it ceased on July 27th in 1953 as the armistice agreement was finalized. Since then, Korea has divided into the South and the North carrying on with a truce for a war that still hasn't ended.

In the aftermath, this was a war among one people, sharing one history, and one language. But, they pointed guns at each other and many countless deaths followed. During the war, how many soldiers have died leaving their names unknown?

We should spare no efforts to prevent this kind of tragedy from happening on this land ever again. If the North and the South can become one peaceful unified nation, behind days of separation and war, wouldn't it be atonement for those numerous lost lives?



# The Memories of the Day We Cried for Democracy

April 19th National Cemetery

We are the April 19th National Cemetery.  
We have the So-gwi-gol Music Concert on April 19 every year.

When the music plays to mourn for the many lost souls  
of the April Revolution,  
painful memories of that day come alive.

Remember the youth who died before their prime,  
but cried their hearts out for Democracy.



August 15th, 1945, the Korean people, full of overwhelming joy, filled the entire country with waves of national flags and patriotic exclamations. This is because it was the long awaited day of their liberation from thirty-five years of Japanese colonization.

But the joyful moments of independence barely stayed, and Korea had to go through a painful period which, as a result, separated the peninsula into Southern and the Northern regions by a way of foreign mediation. In May 1948, South Korea held a separate general election and Yi Seungman was elected as the first President of South Korea.

August 15th, in the same year, the government of the Republic of Korea was established. Korea got out from under foreign control and re-established itself as a democratic republic nation through the election.

However, the beginning of the Republic of Korea was not smooth at all. President Yi Seungman and the Liberal Party, seizing power, imprisoned, and violently mistreated those who were opposed to their Government. To make matters worse, the Korean War occurred in 1950 and it ruined lands in Korea, causing many children to become orphans. Korean people barely survived even with help from other countries.

While the lives of Korean people were falling apart, the Yi Seungman Government shamelessly abused its power over the people and continued in their corruption. Disappointed to see the Yi Seungman Government so self-absorbed in its own interests, the people turned their backs on the Liberal Party and gladly stood with the Democrats.

During the volatile atmosphere of 1960, President Yi Seungman and the Liberals were zealous in preparing for the fourth presidential election. How is it even possible for one person to be the President four times in a row? To keep his autocratic regime, he didn't hesitate to amend the Constitution.

In the end, the presidential and vice-presidential elections in 1960

were stained with fraud. For example, the people were forced to vote in groups of three to five people; then their ballots had to be checked by a member of liberal party before putting it into a ballot box. Also, the liberal party threatened people who supported the democrats and they switched out ballot boxes with the ones filled with Liberal Party votes. The result was, of course, Yi Seungman and Yi Gibung winning the elections.

The fraudulent elections of March 15th found purchase in the citizens' fury.

"Such fraudulence should not stand!"

"We must save Democracy for this land!"

The resistance movement to the fabricated result of the election started in Masan in Gyeongsangnamdo Province. The police crushed the demonstrators on the street by force and many people were hurt or even killed. What made the people even more aghast happened one month later. A high school student named King Juyeol who had been missing after participating in a demonstration was found cold and dead in the sea.

The death of a seventeen-year-old moved people hearts and voices, which diffused across the country crying out for rectification of the fraudulent election. A few days later, on April 18th, the students of Goryeo University crowded around The National Assembly Building and demanded a full investigation on Kim Juyeol's death. But, when they were on their way back to the campus, after finishing the demonstration, they were attacked by a gang. It was actually an incident that Yi Seungman and The Liberal Party manufactured. The surge of rage that the citizens and students felt was almost uncontrollable.

"The people are lamenting!"

"Undo the last election and do it over again!"

"We demand Dictator Yi seungman step down!"

In the early morning of April 19th, 1960, the day that is also called

"Bloody Tuesday", all of the university students in Seoul simultaneously declared their fight for Democracy and rushed to the streets.

#### The April Revolution

Yi Seungman and the Liberal Party was holding the political power tightly through unjust means. On April 19th, 1960, people rose up against the fraudulent Presidential Election. Starting with college students, across the nation, the movement soon gained the citizen's support and participation. As a result, Yi Seungman and his party was removed from the summit of power.

The April Revolution is one of the most critical movements for Korea where people neutralized the Yi Seungman dictatorship.

The ordinary citizens of Seoul also stood with them or supported them from behind. The number of demonstrators reached over one hundred thousand; the whole downtown area filled with one voice. The police shot tear gas at the people to stop them but the number was too overwhelming. As the people came in waves, the police started shooting. The peaceful scene of the demonstration, full of people trying to shed light on the injustice of the fraudulent election and demand their academic freedom, digressed to bloodshed as the police fired live ammunition into the crowd.

The indiscriminate shots fired at the crowd of demonstrators came at the expense of many students and citizens lives. Witnessing students falling to the ground, with the loud crack of gunfire, the citizens became even more furious and started to engage in violent actions such as setting a newspaper company ablaze, and assaulting a police officer. With this event, the Government proclaimed martial law across the country and increased attempts to suppress the people; but these attempts failed to keep the people's strong desires, for political reform, in check.

On April 25th, the professors of universities, who had to witness the deaths of their pupils, joined the movement by calling for President Yi

Seungman's resignation. The voices of the people, crying for democracy, grew louder and more united.

"I, Yi Seungman, am going to resign from the Presidential office and spend the rest of my life, for our country and its people, as an ordinary citizen."

As Yi Seungman decided to step down from his office, the entire country was filled with shouts of victory.

Although the people of Korea succeeded in escaping the dictatorship, thanks to the April Revolution, our hearts still become full of overwhelming emotions of joy and sadness, in hindsight. They can picture the incident so vividly; where the people, young and old, crowded the streets and cried for democracy.

We are here at Suyuri Valley to comfort the young souls who lost their lives during Bloody Tuesday. If you come and visit us, express your thanks to these souls. Without their sacrifices, you wouldn't have had this happiness you have today.



# The Desire for the Spring of Gwangju

## May 18th National Cemetery

We are the great many tombs  
of the May 18th National Cemetery.  
Remember the tragedy in Gwangju on one spring day in May.  
A lot of people fell at the national military's gunpoint.  
I wish my story could comfort their souls.  
Won't you come to see us if you visit Gwangju?





#### The Military Coup and Yushin Autocracy

On May 16th, 1961, military men led by Park Jeonghui overthrew the Korean government by force. The term "military coup" means taking political power by military might.

After becoming the President of Korea, Park Jeonghui expanded his authority by revising Constitutional law to suit his interests in 1972. This is called "The Yushin Constitution." Based on this Constitution, he continued his dictatorship.

#### October 26th Incident

This is the incident in which Kim Jaegyu, the director of the Korean Central Information Agency, murdered President Park Jeonghui in Gungjungdong in Jongrogu, Seoul, in the evening of October 26th, 1979.

The democracy in Korea still didn't take root firmly after The April Revolution. The cabinet elected by the people was built up but couldn't even last a year. Park Jeonghui, then, carried out a military coup with the excuse that he rose up to prevent North Korea's invasion. He continued to maintain his dictatorship by amending the Constitutional laws.

But Park Jeonghui, having swayed his power over the country for 19 years, faced sudden demise. On October 26th in 1979, Kim Jaegyu pulled the trigger on President Park Jeonghui. The people of Korea expected Park Jeonghui's death to be the end of the current military autocracy.

However, Jeon Du-hwan and Noh Taewu, two military leaders, carried out a second coup. As a result, citizens, concerned with the regression of democracy in Korea, initiated a democratization movement. This included Gwangju.

"No more military dictators!"

The demonstration, which started from a university of Gwangju, soon spread to the streets. As the size of the movement grew bigger, President Jeon Duhwan dispatched an army to Gwangju and declared martial law. The

conflicts between the students and the army soaked the streets with blood, and the citizens began to participate in the demonstration. The heart of Gwangju was turning into a battlefield.

#### Martial Law

This indicates a national status where a mobilized military keeps the order of society and also restricts the rights of people when a country goes through a warfare or a crisis where war seems imminent.

Because of the excessive and forceful suppression of the army, a pregnant woman, waiting for her husband, was shot and killed; and young children playing on a playground lost their lives due to stray bullets. Ordinary citizens fell to the ground from blows from military batons.

"To the provincial government building!"

As the horrible news traveled, the enraged people of Gwangju swarmed around the plaza in front of Joennam Provincial Government building. Gathered up in one place, the citizens confirmed their strong will to achieve democracy.

About 300,000 people cried for the realization of democracy every day. Geumnamro Road in Gwangju, the historic site of the movement, became the symbol of The May 18th Democratization Movement.

This people of Gwangju struggled against the oppression of the army from May 18th to 27th. But, other cities in Korea had never understood the reality of the situation. Both the television and newspapers referred to it as "The Gwangju Incident" and said the soldiers were simply suppressing riots in Gwangju.

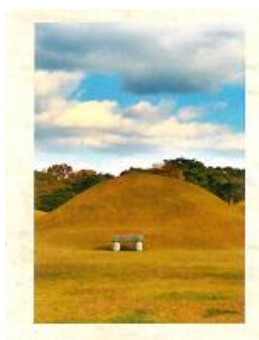
In 1989, the truth of what really happened on that day was brought to light, but the deep scars in the hearts of the people of Gwangju were almost inconsolable.

The people who lost their lives in the slaughter were buried in a cemetery in the Mangwoldong area. Family and friends of the deceased carried the bodies in handcarts and buried them there. Maybe it was because the cemetery was filled with so many tragic deaths that a desolate atmosphere used to surround it. The people were reluctant to visit here, as if tracing back to the memories of that day would reopen a wound that was yet fully healed.

It was quite recent that some people sought to make this cemetery into a sanctuary as it was recognized as a holy place in the history of the Korean democratization movement. It was 1997 when a new cemetery, The May 18th National Cemetery, was constructed. People moved the graves in the Mangwoldong Cemetery to this place, which is where we are now.

Can we become a comfort for the people of Gwangju? And will people now get back the warm spring days which they once lost? Has democracy taken a firm root in this nation now? There are still so many unanswered questions.

## Who are you, old tombs?



### The Five Tombs in Gyeongju

Situated in Tapdong area in Gyeongju, Gyeongsanbukdo Province, the Five Tombs are designated as Historic Site No. 172. *Samgukyusa*, Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms, says these are the tombs of five people including the first ancestor of Silla, King Park Hyeokgeose and his queen Ayeong, King Namhae, King Yuri, and King Pasa, who were the second, the third, and the fifth kings of Silla, respectively.

On the other hand, *Samguksagi*, History of the Three Kingdoms tells us a different story. It tells us that on the seventh day since Park Hyeokgeose's death, his body torn into five pieces fell on to the ground. When his vassals tried to gather the severed pieces of the king's body, a giant snake appeared and stopped them, so they buried him in five separate tombs, hence the name "Sareung," meaning "Serpent Tombs."

The Five Tombs are four units of single-mounded tombs and one unit of twin-mounded tomb which have round tops, like other Silla tombs. Though some argue that these doesn't include the tomb of Park Hyeokgeose since this kind of style appeared after the fourth century, many people believe one of them is his tomb.



## The Royal Tomb of King Wanggeon

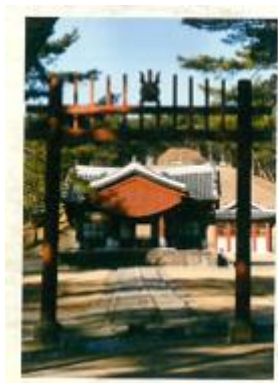
The royal tomb of King Wanggeon is the tomb where the founder of the Goryeo Dynasty, King Wanggeon, and his queen Sinhye are lying together. It is situated at Mt. Mansu in Haeseonri, Gaepung-gun County in Gaeseong.

Since it is in North Korea, we may visit the tomb only after we achieve our unification. North Korea designated this tomb National Treasure No. 179 and continue to preserve it.

The initial name of this tomb was Hyeonreung. It was built in 943 but was moved several times when there were wars, and the current tomb is what was reconstructed in 1994.

The tomb of King Wanggeon, a magnificent royal tomb in a three-stair style, has an interior chamber made of stones and wall paintings in the chamber. This is a type of tombs that can be found in the ones built in the early period of the Goryeo Dynasty. The inside of the stone chamber is splendidly decorated and the exterior appearance is also majestic. This tomb is eight meters tall and stone barriers surround the tomb. Also, the statues of contributors of the kingdom's foundation are standing around the tomb. The shrine at the entrance was restored, in 1954, from the damage caused during the Korean War, and it contains the paintings of King Wanggeon including his portrait and a painting of the royal procession. In front of a gate to the royal tomb site, there's a monument for the restoration of King Wanggeon's tomb.





## Geonwonreung

Geonwonreung is the tomb of Taejo Yi Seong-gye who founded the Joseon Dynasty. This tomb is placed in the innermost of Dong-gureung, situated in Dong-gudong in the City of Guri (Gyeong-gido Province) which is in the northeast of Seoul. Dong-gureung is designated Historic Site No. 193. The name means the tombs of nine kings are placed together in the east of Hanyang Palace.

The royal tombs of the Joseon Dynasty all have one-letter names, except for Geonwonreung which has the two-letter name; the word "Geonwon" means founding a country.

Covered with rough silver grass unlike any other royal tomb, Geonwonreung looks untended. But, there's a story that King Taejong brought the soil and silver grass from Hamheung to cover the tomb of his father who missed his hometown, Hamheung, until his last day.

Although Geonwonreung was made according to a burial style of the Goryeo Dynasty, it also has different characteristics, for example, "Gokjang", walls surrounding three sides of the tomb, and stone statues of the Chinese Zodiac around the tomb. The style of Geonwonreung became exemplary of later royal tombs of the Joseon Dynasty.

Near this tomb, there's a building called "Subokbang" where a manager of a tomb resided and a memorial stone for Taejo Yi Seong-gye's achievements. The royal tombs of the Joseon Dynasty that have a memorial stone are only two: Geonwonreung and Taejong Heonreung. After those two kings, people didn't build memorial stones for kings anymore because all of achievements of kings were documented in the Annals of the Joseon Dynasty,

there was no need to erect memorial stones.

King Taejong built a temple named Gaegyeongsa near his father's tomb, but now, only the site of the temple remains.

## The Tomb of General Gyebaek



This place, known as the tomb of General Gyebaek in the later days of Baekje is on the sunny spot on a hill of Mt. Surak in Sinpungri, Bujeokmyeon in Nonsan (Chungcheongnamdo Province).

In 660, General Gyebaek stood against the attack from the joined forces of Silla and Tang, with largely-outnumbered army. Risking his life, Gyebaek fought bravely in battles and won four battles against Silla but, ultimately, lost his life in the Battle of Hwangsanbeol. Today's General Gyebaek Historic Site is reported to be the place where people buried his body after the war.

Currently, this site is designated Monument No. 74 by Chungcheongnamdo Province and properly preserved, but until 1965 when the tomb was found, it was abandoned and severely damaged, more than half of the tomb collapsed. Newly setting a ground stone for the deceased and filling up the demolished parts with soil, people restored his tomb in the size of 47.6 meters in girth, 15.15 meters in diameter, and 6.5 meters in height.

It was May in 1976, many years later, when the monument stone was finally erected. It writes "the Tomb of General Gyebaek of Baekje."

In Chung-gokri near the general's tomb site, there's another place to pay a visit called Chung-gokseowon, a memorial hall which has a mortuary tablet of General Gyebaek.

## The Tomb of Chungmugong Yi in Asan



The tomb of Chungmugong, Yi Sunsin, a great general in the middle of the Joseon Dynasty, is situated on 12-37 Goryongsanro in Eumbongmyeon, Asanri (Chungcheongnamdo Province). This tomb is designated Historic Site No. 112.

Many people think that General Yi Sunsin was buried in the Hyeonchungsa Temple. In fact, only his memorial tablet was set up in the temple and his tomb was placed at this site. After he was killed during the Battle of Noryang in 1598, his body was buried in the Chungryeolsa Temple in Seolcheonmyeon area in Namhaegun (Gyeongsangnamdo Province). Later, it was moved to Go-geumdo Island in Wandogun, Jeonranamdo Province and, in the next year, it was moved again to the foot of Mt. Geumseong in Asan in Chungcheongnamdo Province. And, after sixteen years, in 1614, his tomb was moved to the current place.

It's an unusual that his resting place changed so many times. But, now he is resting in peace with his wife lying beside him at this site.

The shape of the tomb is round and it was constructed in a typical burial style of the Joseon period as characteristics like a tombstone, a stone altar, stone figures of a military official, a rectangular stone table to invite the soul to come, stone lanterns, and stone animals can be found in front of the tomb. At the entrance, there's a memorial stone on which the Prime Minister King Yuk wrote the epitaph for the general. You can also visit the Hyeonchungsa Temple since it is close to the tomb of Yi Sunsin.



## Yeonghoewon Royal Tomb in Gwangmyeong

Yeonghoewon, a tomb of Minhoebin Gang who was wife of Crown Prince Sohyeon in the later days of the Joseon Dynasty, is designated Historic Site No. 357. It is at No-onsadong in Gwangmyeon, Gyeong-gido Province.

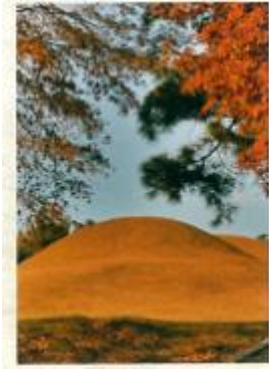
In the times of Joseon, names of tombs were different, such as "Neung," "Won," and "Myo," according to the status of the dead. "Won" is a term for tombs of crown princes or princesses.

Minhoebin Gang, the owner of this tomb, was a daughter-in-law of Joseon's sixteenth king, Injo, yet her tomb looks different from other royal tombs we talked about. The size is so distinctively small that people frequently call it Baby Tomb, or Ah-wangreung.

There's a story about why a tomb of Crown Princess Gang was situated at such a secluded place. After her husband Crown Prince Sohyeon died, she was falsely accused of treason and deprived of her status as a royalty. She, consequently, was buried at a solitary place after her death.

This false charge of treason was removed during King Sukjong's reign, in 1718, and she recovered her status as Crown Princess and her tomb began to be called "Minhoemyo." In 1750, during King Yeongjo's reign, it earned the name Yeonghoewon.

## Tomb of King Mu-ryeong



This tomb of King Mu-ryeong who realized the prime time of Baekje in its history is designated Historic Site No. 13. It is situated at Wungjindong in Gongju (Chungcheongnamdo Province). King Mu-ryeong's tomb is also called Songsanri Tumuli No.7 because it was the seventh royal tomb discovered in the site. This is the only tomb for which people discovered a tombstone, thus, they found out that this was a tomb of King Mu-ryeong.

The tomb of King Mu-ryeong, a special kind which was built in bricks, was found in a perfectly intact condition, so it has incredible value; the style of a construction was unique and thousands of artifacts were discovered in this tomb. As the tomb of King Mu-ryeong was discovered, people could see the real culture of Baekje which was in veil for so long.

The artifacts found in this tomb were priceless: pieces of Jinmyosu, an imaginary animal guarding a tomb, golden crown and ornaments, Hwandu-daedo, a sword on which a dragon and a Chinese phoenix were carved, pillows and foot rests to support a body's head and feet, Osujeon which was a coin of the Liang Dynasty in China, glasses, and mirrors. These artifacts are proof of Baekje's active trades with neighboring countries including Japan and China.





## The tomb of Queen Seondeok in Gyeongju

The tomb of Queen Seondeok who was the first queen and twenty-seventh monarch of Silla is designated Historic Site No. 182. It's situated on the top of Nangsan Mountain in southeastern Gyeongju in Gyeongsangbukdo Province.

When you climb on to the top of Nangsan Mountain along the pines forest, after passing the Sacheonwangsa Temple Site, you can find her tomb in sight.

Queen Seondoek's tomb is a round, rather small tomb in the size of 6.8 meters in height, 23.6 meters in diameter. Stones surround the rim of the tomb.

According to Samguksagi, History of the Three Kingdoms, Queen Seondeok left in her will that she should be buried in Doricheon, a realm of Buddha. Doricheon is one of the heavens in Buddhism. Her counselors asked her where this place could be since they knew no one was able to make a tomb in the heavens. Queen Seondoek told them it is the top of Nangsan Mountain.

The counselors followed her will but still could not understand it. Later, King Munmu built a temple named Sacheonwangsa, and people finally understood the meaning of her will. In Buddhism, Dorichoen is placed upon the place where Sacheonwang live. As the Sacheonwangsa Temple was built underneath the tomb of Queen Seondeok, she was, after all, buried in Doricheon. If you visit her tomb, you should visit the Sacheonwangsa Temple even though only its site is left.



## Sea Tomb of Munmu the Great in Gyeongju

You can find the tomb of Munmu the Great in the offshore area of Bong-gilri, Yangbukmyeon in Gyeongju (Gyeongsangbukdo Province). The Sea Tomb of King Munmu of Silla was designated Historic Site No. 158. It is also called "Daewang-am."

King Munmu was the thirtieth king of Silla and eldest son of King Taejong Muyeol. King Muyeol laid the foundation for the unification of the Three Kingdoms and King Munmu completed it. But, after achieving unification, the Japanese pirates continued to invade Silla and King Munmu was concerned about the safety of his kingdom. So he said his body should be cremated and scattered in the East Sea so that he could become a dragon and protect Silla in his afterlife. According to his will, his funeral took place at Daewang-am in the East Sea.

Daewang-am is a rock in the middle of the sea, 200 meters away from the beach, which has an artificial watercourse through the surface of the rock, letting water go through from the east to the west, thus, make the water midst the rock calm all the time.

Under water, there's a flat stone covering part of the waterway, which is 3.7 meters long, 2.06 meters wide, and people thought King Munmu's ashes were kept inside of the stone. However, the result of an investigation using an ultrasonic detector told us that, in fact, his ashes were not there.

When you visit the Sea Tomb of Munmu the Great, stop by Gam-eunsa Temple nearby. There are stories about King Munmu and his son, King Sinmun in this temple.

## Sejong the Great's Yeong-reung



Yeong-reung where Sejong the Great and Queen Soheon were lying together was designated Historic Site No. 195. This tomb is situated at 269-50 Yeong-reungro of Neungseomyeon in Yeosu (Gyeong-gido Province).

Yeong-reung was the first tomb where a king and a queen were buried in a mound together among the tombs of the Joseon Dynasty.

The tomb of King Sejong was originally next to King Taejong's Heonreung in Seoul. But, in 1468, during Yejong's reign, the burial site for King Sejong said to be inadequate, and officials looked for the best burial site in the kingdom, finally moving his tomb to the current place.

It wasn't easy to move the king's tomb that was once decided. Royal tombs were supposed to be within 40 kilometers from the Capital, and the current burial site was out of that principle.

If you visit Yeong-reung, you can also enjoy beautiful sceneries nearby. On the birthday of Sejong the Great, April 8th, people hold a grand memorial service for King Sejong, which is worth seeing.



## The Tombs of Three Martyrs

In Hyochang Park in Seoul, there are tombs of patriots who lost their lives while participating in the independence movement during the Japanese Colonization. This place is a valuable place to learn about the Korean modern history as it has Kim Gu Museum and Library, and a shrine where portraits of patriots including Kim Gu, Jo Seonghwan, Yi Dongnyeong, and Cha Yiseok are exhibited. There's a separate section for the tombs of Yi Bongchang, Yun Bong-gil, and Baek Jeong-gi, which are called "the Tombs of Three Martyrs."

The initial name of this park was Hyochangwon. It used to house the tombs of Prince Munhyo who is the first son of King Jeongjo, the twenty-second king of the Joseon Dynasty. During the Japanese Occupation, the tomb of Prince Munhyo was moved to the Three West Royal Tombs, and Hyochangwon was renamed Hyochang Park.

It is at an intersection of Hyochangdong, Cheongpadong and Wonhyoro areas in Seoul, designated Historic Site No. 330.



## Seoul National Cemetery

Seoul National Cemetery is situated at Hyeonchungro in Dongjakgu, Seoul. It was in 1952 when the national defense meeting decided to found a cemetery for the deceased soldiers. At first in the meeting, it discussed a need to build a cemetery for military men, but, soon the plan became the initiative to make a cemetery for navy, land and air forces and the cemetery was elevated to the National Cemetery.

However, as the Korean War occurred, this cemetery need more space to comfort the countless lives which were lost during the war. From March 30th in 1965, it started to house tombs of patriotic martyrs, police officers and local reserve forces.

On July 29th in 2005, as the National Assembly proclaimed the Act on the Establishment and Management of National Cemeteries, the name of this cemetery was changed to Seoul National Cemetery and started to include tombs of fire-fighting officers and persons killed or wounded for a righteous cause.

Seoul National Cemetery is Korea's sanctuary where the country housed the tombs of those who sacrificed their lives nobly for the country and the people and left their marks on the national development, preserving and passing the lessons on loyalty and historic achievements to future generations.

This cemetery is not only convenient for transportation but also famous for its beautiful cherry blossoms. Every spring, various events take place in this place.

## April 19th National Cemetery



In Suyudong in Gangbukgu, Seoul, there's a cemetery called April 19th National Cemetery. There are the April Revolution Memorial Hall, the memorial monument, sections for graves, plazas, and on the top of the cemetery, there's a shrine containing portraits of the dead.

This place is where people who fought against a fraudulent election on March 15th were buried. The April Revolution was the first democratization revolution, since the establishment of the Korean Government, where people revolted against unjust autocracy to protect democracy.

Their cries for realization of freedom, democracy, and justice became the example of Korea's democratization.

the April 19th National Cemetery was built to provide a field of education for democracy to the young who will lead Korea in the future and to enlighten the visitors on the spirits of democracy and patriotism.

This place is a good resting place for visitors as it has beautiful surroundings. But, above all, the April 19th National Cemetery has its significance as a sanctuary of the Korean democratization movement.





## May 18th National Cemetery

The May 18th National Cemetery is in Wunjeongdong of Bukgu in Gwangju. This cemetery houses tombs of people who were killed during the May 18th Democratization Movement, trying to protect this nation's democracy.

This cemetery with natural beauties creates a refreshing atmosphere like a park. It also has a forty-meter-tall memorial tower, monuments, and a education and experience center.

Also, the May 18th Memorial Hall provides visitors with objective clues on the democratization movement, victims, and unrevealed truths on the day of May 18th. This is a place where people actually learn about the movement through participation and experience rather than simple observations.

Historically, it was an appalling event, but visit this place to learn about the spirit of May 18th Democratization Movement. You will learn a great lesson to prevent this kind of tragedy from occurring in our future.