

Novel Characteristics of *Uigwe* Illustrations during the King Yeongjo and Jeongjo Era in the 18th century

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Because of the strict and conservative neo-Confucian rites, the tradition of making *uigwe* did not see much change over time until the early 20th century. Nevertheless, the production and quality of *uigwe* varied depending on the king. Therefore, changing the way in which *uigwe* was compiled only occurred by the specific order of the king himself. Today, I'd like to focus on some characteristics of *uigwe* illustrations (often called as '*uigwe-do*') produced under two of the most extraordinary kings, Yeongjo and Jeongjo, of the Joseon Dynasty in the 18th century. During this time, many novel attempts were made in the making and content-building of *uigwe*. Also a systematic and well organized table of contents was typically established.

Let's look at the *uigwe* produced during the era of King Yeongjo first. Living 83 years and reigning for 52 years, he was the most long-lived king of Joseon. During his reign, Yeongjo published over 130 kinds of *uigwe* books. I'd like to talk about the new characteristics of illustrations in *uigwe* during the King Yeongjo period, by looking at the three particular kinds of *uigwe* books. They are: *Uigwe* for Royal Archery Ceremony(大射禮儀軌), *Uigwe* for Making the Spirit Tablet of the Propositus of Royal Yi Clan(位版造成都監儀軌), and *Uigwe* for King Yeongjo's Wedding(英祖貞純后嘉禮都監儀軌).

Let's look into the *Uigwe* for Royal Archery Ceremony first. King Yeongjo made a lot of efforts to modify the system of state rites and to restore the royal guards of honor. He revived several state rites whose tradition had ceased for 200 years since the Japanese invasion in 1592. Such rites include the royal archery ceremony, the king's plowing ceremony(親耕儀), and the Queen's sericulture ceremony(親蠶儀). As an attempt to continue the ceremonial heritage founded by the previous kings, King Yeongjo ordered *Uigwe* books to be compiled for each event. Therefore, we find an unprecedented variety of events depicted in *uigwes*. The royal archery ceremony, which took place for the first time in over 200 years, was preceded by the king's paying of a memorial service at the Hall of Confucius in the National Confucian Academy. After the memorial service, King Yeongjo performed the archery with a group of high officials. In addition to making *uigwe*, Yeongjo stipulated the ritual protocols and the rank-positioned chart

in the *Sequel to the Five Rites of the Nation*(國朝續五禮儀), which is the revised book of *the Five Rites of the Nation*(國朝五禮儀) in 1744.

The illustrations of this *uigwe* are special enough to catch one's eyes. Created in 1743, these *uigwe-do* are new types with no previous example, and it is almost like watching the scenes of *the* court documentary paintings. In this *uigwe-do*, the ceremony's procedures are portrayed into three parts, which are 1) archery demonstrations attended by the king and 2) by the pairs of high officials, and 3) a scene in which the awards and penalties are given. When four separate pages are supposedly connected, we can see the whole picture. The *uigwe* texts on the rank position and arrangements of every participant and utensil accurately correspond to those in the *uigwe* illustrations. It is clear that the illustration, by itself, was meant to convey the basic procedure or setup of the event.

These new types of illustrations demonstrate how King Yeongjo understood the value and power of visual reference more than any other leaders of Joseon Dynasty. He must have known that the later generations would understand the procedures of ceremony more easily when they were depicted in the style of the documentary paintings. Important events such as this royal archery ceremony were also celebrated by the government officials who participated in the event, by the long-established custom of commissioning documentary paintings as private tokens of commemoration and camaraderie. The pictorial style of the *uigwe-dos* and documentary paintings often turned out to be similar, because it was mostly the same group of court painters who worked on the both.

The second notable *uigwe* book produced during King Yeongjo period is the *Uigwe for Making the Spirit Tablet of the Propositor of Royal Yi Clan*. This *uigwe* is a distinguishing example showing the king's endeavor to empower the status of the dynasty. In 1771, Yeongjo built a new ancestral shrine, called *Jogyeongmyo*, for Yi Han, who was the progenitor of the royal Yi family. The construction venue was north side of the Gyeonggi-jeon Hall in Jeolla province, where the portrait of the King Taejo, the founder of Joseon Dynasty, was enshrined. Initially King Yeongjo wanted to verify the alleged site of Yi Han's tomb, but because of the lack of evidence, only the tablet of spirit ended up being enshrined. Enshrining the tablet of spirit was directly related to securing the royal family's legitimacy in the dynasty where the continuation of royal heritage was imperative. Therefore, a temporary office of superintendency(都監), an office for important court event, was established.

This *uigwe* contains two kinds of illustrations. One is the *bancha-do* depicting the procession toward the *Jogyeongmyo*, the other is the scene portraying the crossing the Hangang

River. This picture shows pairs of small boats pulling a big boat with the spirit tablet in it to cross the Hangang River. Although multiple perspectives are mixed here, the whole picture makes it easy to understand how the tablet was transported across the river. Before the times of Yeongjo, *uigwe* illustrations that portray the conducting of ceremony mostly included pictures of linear processions. However, the two *uigwe* paintings we just looked at occasionally adopted an aerial perspective, a technique that had been used in the documentary paintings. Therefore, it is notable that a different perspective taken from documentary paintings was adopted in the *uigwe* illustrations in 18th century.

The third noteworthy *uigwe* book produced during King Yeongjo era is the *Uigwe* for King Yeongjo's Wedding of 1759. During the reign of King Yeongjo, the procession of the king's grand palanquin was for the first time documented and included in the *uigwe* book. The king undertook a large reconfiguration of the system of state rites and the guards of honor, and then ordered the new system of the state-run procession to be recorded as *bancha-do* and later included in *uigwe*. This was a way of chronicling that it was he who renewed the system. And a great visual asset for both historians and art historians today on how the procession including the king himself was done.

The king's procession with his grand palanquin is also drawn in the *bancha-do* in *Uigwe* of King Yeongjo's Wedding of 1759. A *bancha-do* illustration that depicts a royal wedding typically showed a procession of the queen-to-be going out of her temporary residence and entering the palace before the couple's formal wedding bow. In this *Uigwe*, however, the king himself goes to the temporary residence to greet and to accompany the bride toward the palace. The procedure of accompanying the bride to the palace was established in the early 16th century, but it was not put in statutory form till Yeongjo era. This longer procession with an additional schedule meant that the *bancha-do* in the 1759 *Uigwe* was much thicker in volume than other wedding *uigwe* books.

The first example of the king's grand palanquin procession appears on the *Uigwe* depicting the King Sukjong's portrait transported to be enshrined in the portrait hall in 1748. King Yeongjo's procession followed after the palanquin containing the new portrait, highlighting the significance of the portrait hall. Another example is in the *Uigwe* for Making the Spirit Tablet of the Propositus of Royal Yi Clan. It is also a *bancha-do* depicting the procession of the palanquin carrying the spirit tablet, followed by the king and his attendants.

It also shows a set of changes in production method of *uigwe-do*. Illustrations in *uigwe* made for the king's view had been done entirely by hand before. But in 1759 the development of carving technique allowed the King's palanquin and its bearer to be carved as one wood stamp. This one-stamp technique, where the preliminary sketches, engraving, and printing created a harmony, had never been used until this Wedding *Uigwe* of 1759 before. Carving the palanquin and its bearers in one stamp must have been a difficult task but it seems the king's palanquin was regarded as a section important enough to take such ambitious project. Except for the king's palanquin, the rest of *bancha-do* here was depicted by hand.

So, this *Bancha-do* presented to the king is the first case done in a combination of hand-drawing and woodblock printing. This doesn't mean that the painting was lower in quality, because the court painters added careful retouches over the rough outlines and colors. Hence, the end result was a set of paintings that were as meticulous and splendid as the ones solely done by hands.

It was King Jeongjo, grandson of King Yeongjo, who brought a set of revolutionary changes in the procedures *uigwe* books were made. The particular characteristics of *uigwe* created under King Jeongjo can be found through the two remaining *uigwe* books: *Uigwe* for the King Jeongjo's visit to Hyeollyung-won Tomb in 1795(園幸乙卯整理儀軌: hereafter I refer it *Jeongni Uigwe*) and *Uigwe* for the Construction of Hwaseong Citadel in 1801(華城城役儀軌: hereafter I refer it *Hwaseong Uigwe*).

The Eulmyo Year, 1795, was the 60th birth year of King Jeongjo's both parents, Prince Sado and Lady Hyegyeong. So, in 1795, King Jeongjo planned to visit the tomb of his father, accompanying his mother, and to host a celebratory banquet at the new city of Hwaseong, whose citadel was under the construction. These two key events, the visits to the royal tomb and to the banquet, posed a particular challenge for Jeongjo in ordering the compilation of *uigwe*. Before, execution of court banquets in *uigwe* was recorded in text only. Jeongjo's grandfather King Yeongjo defined the rank-positioned diagram of the court banquet in the *Sequel to the Five Rites of the Nation*. When the actual banquet was being planned, he inspected and approved the same type of diagram prior to the rehearsal. But the diagram did not end up included in *uigwe*. So there was no past example of *uigwe* illustrations that depict a court banquet to consult. Moreover, the king's visit to the royal tomb was a subject matter that had never been recorded in the *uigwe* books. Therefore, a significant change was needed to put the two very different events (visiting the tomb and the birthday banquet) in one set of *uigwe* books.

In the end, Jeongjo extended the number of volumes into 8, with a more thorough and systematized table of contents so that the set of *uigwe* books could exhibit all of the contents and information. Also, this *uigwe* was printed by metal movable types, which allowed the production of 101 *uigwe* copies. Considering that the previous *uigwe* books were handwritten and reached mere five to eight copies his number is incomparably. There are about 30 copies of this *uigwe* found today.

Unlike the previous *uigwe* books, in which the illustrations were inserted in the middle of the texts, this set of *uigwe* boasts a separate volume that contains 112 pages of woodblock prints, the schedule of events, and the list of persons who were in charge. The first illustration shows the venue of the events, *Palace at Hwaseong Citadel*, followed by the *Birthday Banquet for Lady Hyegyeong at Bongsudang*, which was considered the most important by the king. And the rest of the recorded ceremonies or episodes are: Banquet for the Elders, Memorial Service to Confucius, Award Ceremony for Successful Candidates of the Special State Exam, Military Drill at the Hwaseong Fortress, Ceremonial Archery and Fireworks, and Bestowing the Rice to the Peoples of Hwaseong. The illustrations of this *uigwe* are notable in that the dominant pictorial style is based on the documentary painting, which was, as I mentioned earlier, a newly adopted tradition by King Yeongjo. The same style was used in the eight-fold commemorative screen paintings(華城陵幸圖屏) of the same subject.

Also depicted are the *bancha-do paintings* of the royal procession going back and forth between Hanyang and Hwaseong as well as the scene where a row of ships connected over Hangang River allows the procession to continue. A linear perspective, an increasingly popular technique in the late 18th century Joseon, is applied to this *Pontoon Bridge* painting, so that the sense of depth and distance is rendered more vividly. As you can see, this *bancha-do* is different from the previous paintings. It shows the entire length and scale of the actual procession, comprised of about 1600 attendants and more than 800 horses. This enormous parade was recorded throughout the 63 pages. The *uigwe-do* records every position of the participants, but also boasts more natural renditions of the bodily moves and individualized faces. Lastly, two more post-journey events held at Changgyeong-gung Palace were recorded. One is the birthday banquet presented to Lady Hyegyeong on her real birthday; another is the distribution of rice by the king.

Furthermore, the illustrations for 14 different types of court dance, flowers for various occasions, musical instruments, costumes for different groups of people, and other ceremonial objects such as furniture and tableware are documented.

While maintaining the conventional format, these illustrations provide more detailed and systematic portrayal of court events or appliances used in the events. And such way was done by depicting objects in various perspectives to enhance the understanding of the reader. For example, these studies 11-page-long graphic diagrams show the palanquin ridden by Lady Hyegyeong from every four side. Moreover, supplementary components of each side are also depicted in extra detail so that any repair or reproduction can be done based on these paintings. The whole drawing of an object is complemented by those detailing small sections to make it easier to explain the object. This idea can be seen as an influence from the Wubei Zhi(武備志), *Treatise on Armaments Technology*, which is one of the most comprehensive Chinese military books published in the 17th century. Of the 738 illustrations of Wubei Zhi, some contain complementary explanation depicting both the whole and partial perspectives.

Another significant *uigwe* designed under the special order of King Jeongjo was *Uigwe for the Construction of Hwaseong Citadel*. It is done in almost the same format of the earlier *uigwe* I've just discussed. When Jeongjo visited his father's tomb in Hwaseong in 1795, the city's fortress was under construction. The project of construction was finished in 1796, but the compilation of *uigwe* was completed in 1801, a year after Jeongjo's death. Just like the *uigwe* illustrations depicting the king's visit to his father's tomb, this one starts with an overall view of the Hwaseong. The picture seems to serve almost as a pictorial map of the city, and as a visual counterpart of the equally detailed texts.

And, just like the pictures of Lady Hyegyeong's palanquin, the book includes a set of sketches detailing a crane. For the architectural structures of the fortress, we see three different perspectives for the citadel walls and tower: two from inside and outside of the walls, and a see-through sketch. In depicting the cart, called *Yuheong-geo*, which transported various materials, shading was used to enhance the sense of three dimensionality. Also, there are pictures depicting the banquet to celebrate the completion of construction and the bestowing of meal by the King to workers.

One of the most interesting features of the *Hwaseong Uigwe* is that the depiction of public buildings goes beyond a mere record and almost becomes a beautiful landscape painting. Unlike the previous architectural illustrations in *uigwe*, which often portrayed the layouts or mere facades of buildings, these pictures allow a glimpse of the general landscape as well as the function of the building. In fact, the level of accuracy and detail of these drawings is so high that they were used to restore the ruined citadel after the Korean War.

King Jeongjo was a highly enlightened figure. The drastic changes in the compilation of *uigwe* under King Jeongjo suggest that there must have been a strong underlying motivation. In order to revolutionize the previous system that had been maintained for generations, the King did lots of research; he collected and studied a wide range of Chinese books, and applied the best features to making *uigwe* of new format.

Apart from Wubei Zhi whom I mentioned earlier, other books that influenced the production of *Hwaseong Uigwe* were: *Qiqi tushuo*(奇器圖說), the Illustrated Explanation of Western mechanical knowledge and devices, which was first translated into Chinese in 1627, *Gujin Tushu Jicheng*(古今圖書集成), the imperial encyclopedia completed in the reign of Yongzheng emperor, and Chinese local records, *fangzhi* (方志).

It is very likely that Jeongjo got his inspiration from the documentary paintings made by his contemporaries in Qing China, such as *wanshou shengdian*(萬壽盛典), an illustrated book that commemorates the 60th birthday of Emperor Kangxi. For example, there are some similarities between the two *uigwes* and *wanshou shengdian*: both used metal types for texts and lots of woodblock prints for images. There is no demonstrated evidence that King Jeongjo actually had a chance to look into these books, but it's likely that he had at least heard and known about them.

These distinct qualities of two *uigwe* books are distinguishable from the ones produced in other eras. One reason that such high-quality *uigwe* could be produced was the system of the painters-in-waiting at Kyujanggak(奎章閣 差備待令畫員制度). The system allowed many skilled painters to be recruited to the court and to be trained, which ultimately elevated the level of court paintings. The selected painters were "on call," or readily available, whenever there was an important art-related project. It is highly likely that both *Jeongni Uigwe* and *Hwaseong Uigwe* were executed by the painters-in-waiting of Kyujanggak.

Again, it was Jeongjo's intent to reinforce authority of the court and of his own by producing these *uigwe* books in different formats. But the next *uigwe* made for the appointment and wedding of the crown prince in 1800, was compiled in a rather traditional method. The biggest significance of the *Jeongni Uigwe* lies in its influence on the production of 19th century *uigwe* for court banquets. The new procedures for *Jeongni Uigwe* were maintained during the reigns of King Sunjo in early 19th century, who was son of Jeongjo, up to King Gojong in the 20th century. While most of *uigwe* books were compiled following the traditional system, those made for court banquets were always modeled after the *Jeongni Uigwe*.

It seems that Joengjo's system was adopted during the banquet of the 60th coming-of-age anniversary of Lady Hyegyong in 1809. King Sunjo made the 1795 banquet for Lady Heygyeong's 60th birth year and *Jeongni Uigwe* as models for the coordination of his banquet and the commemorative *uigwe*. Hence, until the 19th century, *Jeongni Uigwe* continued to be used as the prototype on which later *uigwe* for court banquets were based.

So far, I have talked about some novel characteristics of *uigwe* illustrations during the King Yeongjo and Jeongjo period. The two kings efficiently used the power of images in *uigwe* not only to heighten their authority but also to facilitate smoother preparation of subsequent court rites. More specifically, King Yeongjo attempted to reinforce his administrative achievements to the future generations by inserting the changes or creations of the rites in the *uigwe* books. King Jeongjo recognized the potential impact of *uigwe* illustrations, and thus made the books easier to understand for the readers. At the same time, he strived to continue the fundamental goals of *uigwe*: accurate documentation and permanent conservation of the court ritual protocols. Ultimately, the two kings succeeded in using the *uigwe* to reinforce the authority of royal family and to leave their legacy for the subsequent generations.