



Royal religiosity: Confucian thoughts in Joseon Jongmyo shrine

David W. Kim & Won-Il Bang |

To cite this article: David W. Kim & Won-Il Bang | (2021) *Royal religiosity: Confucian thoughts in Joseon Jongmyo shrine*, Cogent Social Sciences, 7:1, 1970426, DOI: [10.1080/23311886.2021.1970426](https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2021.1970426)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2021.1970426>



© 2021 The Author(s). This open access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) 4.0 license.



Published online: 05 Sep 2021.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 1918



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Royal religiosity: Confucian thoughts in Joseon Jongmyo shrine

David W. Kim and Won-Il Bang

Cogent Social Sciences (2021), 7: 1970426



Received: 11 February 2021
Accepted: 14 August 2021

*Corresponding author: David W. Kim,
Australian National University &
Kookmin University, Australia
E-mail: davidwj_kim@yahoo.co.uk

Reviewing editor:
Zhouxiang Lu, National University of
Ireland Maynooth, Ireland

Additional information is available at
the end of the article

SOCIOLOGY | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Royal religiosity: Confucian thoughts in Joseon Jongmyo shrine

David W. Kim^{1*} and Won-Il Bang¹

Abstract: While the geopolitics of East Asia is a crucial issue among its nations (Japan, Korea, China, and Vietnam), Chinese culture has been transmitted into the lifestyle and history of each ethnic society in these countries. The globalization of philosophy, cosmology, and literature (either officially or individually) has spurred alternative lines of thought, and the transnational movement of traditional religions was no exception. Korea's history proves that the fundamental teachings of Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism were passed onto the ancient and medieval kingdoms and dynasties in which they transformed local cultures and structures. The national philosophy of leadership was also affected by the dynamic of Chinese religions rather than that of Shamanism. Daoism arrived at the Goguryeo kingdom in 624 CE, while Buddhism was the key teaching for the establishment of the Goryeo dynasty (918–1392). Neo-Confucian thought served as one of the most substantial influences for the Joseon dynasty (1392–1910). Then, how did the Chinese tradition emerge in early Joseon? What was the social function of Jongmyo (宗廟)? How was the metaphysical philosophy of this religion embodied in the royal shrine? This paper explores the history, composition, procedure, and peculiarity of *Jongmyo Jerye* (ritual), *Jerye-ak* (musical performance), and architecture to argue that Confucian values of the initial royal religiosity are re-creatively represented in the State Shrine as the intellectual thoughts of the Joseon dynasty (or early modern Korea) in the aspects of Ye (禮,

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



David W. Kim

David W. Kim (PhD: Syd) is a Honorary Lecturer at the School of History, College of Arts and Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra and an Associate Professor of Asian History at the College of General Education, Kookmin University, Seoul. He is a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society (RAS), UK and the Editor for *Series in Modern East Asian Religion and Culture* (MEARAC). Kim's publications include *Sacred Sites and Sacred Stories Across Cultures* (2021) and *Daesoon Jinrihoe in Modern Korea* (2020).

Won-Il Bang (PhD: SNU) is a HK research professor of Soongsil University, Seoul and a lecturer at the Department of Religious Studies, Seoul National University. Bhang's publications include *Korean Religions at Modern Transformative Space* (2021), *Religious Studies in Korea: Religion, Religions, and Religious Culture* (2019), *Science and Religion in Korea* (2019), and *Mary Douglas* (2018).

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Jongmyo is the royal shrine of the Joseon dynasty in modern Korea (1392–1910). The national legacy is recognized as one of the most significant World Heritage sites. The pilgrims and visitors get impressed over the unique characteristic of ancestor worship. The descendants of the Yi royal family, with the government agency, still regularly perform the Jongmyo ritual two times a year (May and November), but the religio-political insights of the sacred space have not been systematically demonstrated. This paper attempts to explore the history, composition, procedure, and peculiarity of the State Shrine in terms of *Jongmyo jerye* (ritual), *Jerye-ak* (musical performance), and its architecture. The Confucian values of the royal religiosity are then argued as the intellectual thoughts of the Joseon dynasty in the aspects of Ye (courtesy), Hyo (filial piety), Chung (loyalty), Samjae (three worlds), and the Yin-Yang and Five Elements theory.

courtesy), Hyo (孝, filial piety), Chung (忠, loyalty), Samjae thought (三才思想), and the Yin-Yang and Five Elements theory (陰陽五行說).

Subjects: Asian Studies; Sociology & Social Policy; Intercultural Communication; History; Religion; Cultural Studies

Keywords: East Asia; Politics; Korean History; ritual; Confucianism; Jongmyo

1. Introduction

The teachings of Confucius (551–479 BCE) are often defined as humanistic, given their particular emphasis on family and social harmony (Juergensmeyer, 2005; Knapp, 2009). Confucianism is based on the assumption that human beings are intelligent, improvable, and perfectible through personal and communal endeavors, especially self-cultivation and self-creation (Feuchtwang, 2016; Mi Ra. Park, 2015). Related ethics are characterized by the promotion of the *Five Constant Virtues* (五倫): benevolence, righteousness (or justice), propriety, wisdom = knowledge, and sincerity (Hsü, 1970/1971; Runes, 1983; Allan, 2011; Legge, 1872). These virtues form the foundation required to live a moral life, while the *Three Fundamental Bonds* (三綱) designate the social relationships essential for structuring human social life (Hsü, 1970-1971; Allen, 2012). The Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucians combined these two moral teachings into a single cosmological principle standing for human social order.¹

As the Chinese thought was transnationally transmitted throughout history, the cultures and countries in East Asia, including Vietnam, Japan, and Korea, were strongly influenced (Billioud & Thoraval, 2015; Elman et al., 2002; Lee, 2012; Yingshi, 1996; Elman, Duncan and Ooms, 2002; Legge, 1872). The religious philosophy was implanted in Vietnam during the thousand years of its political and military occupation by China (111 BCE-938 CE). The principles of compliance and admiration, for education and authority, were instilled throughout the nation, profoundly influencing the community structure and creating a tightly defined social hierarchy. The establishment of the Văn Miếu (文廟, Temple of Literature) marked the emergence of Confucianism in Hanoi in 1070. The movement experienced a socio-religious revival during the 15th century—the “golden age” of Emperor Lý Thánh Tông, then gradually decayed into decline and depravity, opening the door for the French invasion (Kim & Lim, 2001; III. Confucianism in Vietnam, 2018; cf. <http://www.sacredtexts.com/asia/rsv/rsv06.htm>).

For Japan, the Chinese religion was introduced via the Korean kingdom of Baekje (百濟, 18 BCE-660 CE). The ancient Japanese text, *Records of Ancient Matters* (古事記, Kojiki, 712) proves that Geunchogo (近肖古), the Baekje ruler (?-375) had sent a lecturer called Wanigishi (和邇吉師, or Wangin 王仁), along with a copy of *the Analects of Confucius* (論語) and another classic text, *the Thousand Character Classic* (千字文), to the ruler of Yamato (大和, やまと). The intention was that of educating the Yamato prince in Confucianism and the Chinese language (Abe, 1965; Ansart, 1998). During the formative years of Japan (6th to 9th centuries), Prince Shōtoku Taishi (聖徳太子, しろうとくたいし, 547–622), the first great supporter of Confucianism and Buddhism, inaugurated a Seventeen Article Constitution (十七条憲法, Jūshichijū Kenpō) that founded Confucian ideals and Buddhist ethics as the moral foundation of the young maritime country. The social structure served for many centuries as the Japanese blueprint for court etiquette and decorum (Bellah, 1985). During the Edo period (1600–1868), Confucian ethics experienced a renew of various sorts. Neo-Confucianism (朱熹学, Shushigaku) received great appeal among the samurai class and the reigning elite. The revised form of Confucianism brought renewed attention to the upper-class men, to social responsibility in secular contexts, and challenged¹ the moral supremacy of the powerful Buddhist monasteries (Boot, 1983; Fung, 2008).

The philosophical ‘religion’² spread to Korea via Chinese commanderies, especially the Lelang Commandery (樂浪郡, the Wiman Joseon area), which had power over the northern territories up until the fourth century (Hyung-Ju Han, 2017). More specifically, a Confucian academy (太學,

Taehak) was established in the Goguryeo kingdom in 372 CE. A little later, the National Confucian Academy (國學, *Kukhak*) was founded in the Later Silla (698–935), which controlled the central (Pyongyang) and southern regions of the Korean peninsula. This institution was renamed as the National Confucian University (太學監, *Taehakkam*) in 750 CE (Cartwright, 2018; Seung-ho Lee, 2016). A state examination based on Confucian texts was launched for the public employment of new administrators in the Goryeo dynasty (918–1392 CE) (Figure 1). The twelve private academies, called the *Twelve Assemblies* (十二徒, *Sibido*), were established in the eleventh century. Most famous one was the “School of Nine Studies” (九齋學堂, *Kujae haktang*), set up by Choe Cheung (崔沖, 984–1068 CE), who became known as “the Confucius of Korea.”³ The application of Confucianism was a signal of medieval Korea’s intention to adopt elements of Chinese culture and its principles of filial piety (Hyeongju Han, 2000). Yet, Buddhism that arrived at the similar time with Confucianism to the Korean peninsula, were the one firstly proclaimed as the state religion of the Three Kingdoms (Goguryeo, 高句麗; Baekje, 百濟; and Silla, 新羅) as well as the Goryeo dynasty. The humanistic values (morality, ethics, and allegiance) and knowledge of Confucian philosophy were gradually perceived by the ancient and medieval Korean intellectuals, with Shamanism and folk religion largely pursued by the lower and rural classes (Deuchler, 1992, 2015; Hyeongju Han, 2000).⁴ However, the royal authorities still strongly embraced the teachings of *patriotic* Buddhism (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Jeongjeon, the main hall of Jongmyo © Won-il Bang.



Figure 2. A scene of Jongmyo Jerye-ak © Korea Tourism Organization (IR Studio)



2. Joseon dynasty and the royal Jongmyo

The geopolitical conditions of the Korean peninsula changed in the fifteenth century. The early modern period not only witnessed the emergence of a new dynasty, the Joseon (1392–1897), but also experienced the development and prosperity of Neo-Confucian thought. The founding king Taejo (Yi Seong-gye) aspired to create a new nation based on the teachings of Confucius as guiding principles, and he became allied with a group of reform-minded Confucian scholars. Taejo then moved the capital from Gaegyeong to Hanyang (current Seoul) (Georu Park, 1996; Jae-Hoon Kang, 2017) following Feng-shui principles (Han & Park, 2002). The new thought emphasized order and peace in the cultivation of harmonious interpersonal relationships and proper personal conduct (Cho, 2001; Ji, 2000). The yangban (兩班, new social aristocrat) stratum was trained and educated in the Chinese philosophy in the process of edification (教化, Gyohwa), as well as through the Confucian virtue of royal proclamations and legal codes. Confucianism was eventually chosen as the national religion, achieving wide acceptance over other beliefs, especially Buddhism and Shamanism.⁵ The Jongmyo (宗廟) was built on the east side of the royal palace (1395), while the Sajik Shrine (社稷壇) was erected on the west side (Hwang & Baek, 2003). The construction of the royal shrine even predated that of the main palace, Gyeongbokgung (景福宮). What, then, was the Jongmyo? What was the feature of the royal religiosity determined by the founding king in the establishment of this sacred place? How were the metaphysical ideas of Neo-Confucianism embodied in the politico-cultural state shrine of the Joseon dynasty?

When Confucian teachings became the fundamental philosophy in the Joseon dynasty's state government, the royal act of ancestral worship was considered as the most important virtue, according to *Gukjo Oryeui* (國朝五禮儀, Five Rites of State, written in 1474) (Hyung-Ju Han, 2017; Jae-Hoon Kang, 2017). The associated customs originated from the classical teaching of Yegi (記, the Book of Rites), one of the Confucian scriptures classifying five rites (五禮): gilrye (吉禮, auspicious rite), hyungrye (凶禮, funeral rites), gunrye (軍禮, military rites), binrye (賓禮, reception ceremonies), and garye (嘉禮, wedding ceremonies) (Choi & Noh, 2009). Of these five, gilrye—concerning ancestral rites and filial piety—was the most highly valued (Choi & Noh, 2009). Joseon featured various Confucian institutions in the form of Seonggyungwan (成均館, the highest educational institution), hyanggyo (鄉校, the Confucian temple and public school to teach local students), and Seowon (書院, a private educational institution where sacrifices were also made to ancient Confucian sages). However, the Jongmyo served as the royal Confucian sanctuary dedicated to the perpetuation of memorial services for deceased kings and queens (Kwon, 2012; Idem 2015).⁶ The philosophical background of Jongmyo included the Samjae thought (三才思想) that the universe is composed of heaven, earth, and humans, taken from the Confucian *Book of Changes* (周易 I-Ching, Yijing: one of the *Five Classics* (*Wujing*)) (Dongku Kang, 2012). The harmonious interaction of each element produces a peaceful balance in the universe,⁷ an idea that is also reflected in the Yin-Yang and Five Elements theory (陰陽五行說; metal, wood, water, fire, and earth) (Keum, 2009; Dawson, 2018).

Jongmyo primarily functioned as the ruling place for the emperor or feudal lords during China's Han dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE, including the Western Han (202 BC–9 AD), the Xin dynasty (9–23 AD) and the Eastern Han (25–220 AD)). The “Myo” (廟) in “Jongmyo” is comprised of two concepts: (1) an upper class house of a family that has inherited territory and a title of nobility, and (2) a place where an emperor resides, performs a diversity of rituals, and issues political orders. The imperial family performed ancestral rituals in their “Myo” buildings (Li, 2020, pp. 2–4; Zhihai & Zhijing, 1993). The “Jong (宗, Zu)” of “Jongmyo” refers to their forebears; thus, Myo buildings were eventually named as Jongmyo shrines (Seo, 2016a; Idem, 2016b). The Tiao Miao (太廟) in the southeast of Beijing expansively functioned as the imperial ancestral temple of the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1636–1912) dynasties. The Hall for Worship of Ancestors, the most sacred site, have seats and beds for the tablets of emperors and empresses. The Zhong Dian (Middle Hall) stores imperial ancestral tablets, while the Hou Dian (Back Hall) keeps the memorial tablets for remote imperial ancestors. The emperors participated the occasion of large-scale ceremonies, such as the “Shi Xiang” (held in the first months of the four seasons), the “Xia Ji” (end-of-year ceremony) and “Gao Ji” (national events ceremonies) (Li, 2020, pp. 4–14; De Bary & Chan, 1960; Seo, 2016b; Zhihai & Zhijing, 1993).⁸

The philosophy behind this imperial ancestral shrine, which was sustained for many centuries in Chinese history, was not directly but re-creatively adopted by the new Korean dynasty, the Joseon (Shin, 2014). Previously, the civilian tradition of Shijomyo (始祖廟) was prevalent during the Three Kingdoms' era (37 BCE-562 BC) (Mi Ra Park, 2015). However, the Joseon State Jongmyo reflects a royal aspiration for projecting the ideals of Neo-Confucianism (性理學) into the new capital in Seoul. The royal religiosity based on Confucian values was depicted as comprised of the intellectual thoughts of Joseon (or early modern Korea) through the aspects of Ye (courtesy), Hyo (孝, filial piety), Chung (忠, loyalty), Samjae thought, and the Yin-Yang and Five Elements theory. This socio-religious ideology was consequentially proved in the symbolic meanings of *Jongmyo Jerye* (Confucian rite), *Jerye-ak* (musical performance), and architecture.

3. Jongmyo Jerye

The Korean royal ancestral shrine of Jongmyo is unique in East Asia culture. This raises a question: how were the state rituals distinctive? Spirit tablets are normally kept in a small shrine in the house or palace, but the State Jongmyo was built separate from the palace. One could dispute that the Jongmyo was not an active shrine given that it was closed most of the time, in contrast to the lively Japanese royal shrines in Tokyo or Kyoto (Choi & Noh, 2009; cf. Dawson, 2018). However, the Joseon continuously performed a royal rite in the form of *Jongmyo Jerye* (宗廟祭禮). The king conducted this rite five times per year (spring, summer, autumn, winter, and Nabil (日, the twelfth lunar month)) at Jeongjeon (正殿, the main hall of Jongmyo) and three times per years (spring, autumn, and in Lunar December) at Yeongnyeongjeon (永寧殿永寧殿, the Hall of Eternal Peace, an auxiliary shrine) (Huang, 2014). In both cases, the most appropriate dates were selected. Additional rites were also practiced on special state occasions to notify the ancestral spirits of the events (National Palace Museum of Korea, 2016).⁹ The sacrificial rite preparation took place in various royal facilities, including Jeonsacheong (典祀廳, office for national rites), Akgongcheong (樂工廳, building for ritual musicians), and Hyangdaecheong (香大廳, building for ritual supplies and officiants) (Choi & Noh, 2009).¹⁰

Jeongjeon contains nineteen chambers housing forty-nine spirit tablets of kings and queens ranging from King Taejo to King Sunjong, although Ming China (1368-1644) featured nine chambers only (Hyeon-jin Lee, 2009; Lee, 2015; Kang et al., 2014).¹¹ The tablets of two deposed kings, Yeonsanggun (燕山君) and Gwanghaegun (光海君), are not held in the royal shrine. However, the tablet of Danjong (端宗), whose title was restored under King Sukjong (1674-1720) after being abdicated by his uncle Sejo, is enshrined in Yeongnyeongjeon (Ji, 2000). Here, Jong Chun Park has criticized the political implications of precedence: although the Confucian society considers the two relationships of blood (family) and social order of rank (nation), when these conflict with each other, family relations are prioritized (Jong Chun Park, 2001).

How can we then identify Confucian elements in the Jongmyo Jerye (ritual)? The answer to this question lies in the notion that the state ritual consists of three major procedures: greeting the spirits, entertaining the spirits, and receiving blessings from the spirits (Choi & Noh, 2009). Nine strict formalities accompany each procedure based on the Confucian Samjae thought that there are three ideological categories of heaven (天神), earth (地神), and humanity (人神). The royal rite begins when the parade of carrying Chukham (祝函, a box containing incense and prayer papers) passes through the south gate towards Jeongjeon (Ji, 2000; National Palace Museum of Korea, 2016). The first procedure is to invite and greet the spirits. Most of the rites are held by the king, officiants, and royal family. At this time, the king emerges from the Socha (小次, the king's resting room) and enters Jeongjeon, while all officiants take their designated positions. The procedure of *Chwiwi* (就位) refers to when the king and Choheongwan (初獻官, ritual officials who bring the wine needed for rituals) take their positions in the shrine's chamber (Cho & Kim, 2005).¹² At 1 a.m., the king burns incense three times and pours wine three times on the ground, as white ramie is offered as a gift for the spirits. *Cheonjorye* (初獻官薦俎禮) designates the time for ritual table setting.¹³ The ritual procedure was determined based on the teaching of Chinese philosophy that when the ritual attendants face the spirit tablets, their right sides always face east while their left sides face west.

The second procedure of entertaining the spirits begins with *Chohyeonrye* (初獻禮). When food for the spirits is serviced in the rite of *Jinchan* (進饌), the king offers the first cup of wine while the *Daechungwan* (代奠官, the master of the ancestral rite) recites the prayer from the prayer paper (Choi & Noh, 2009; Keum, 2009). Offering wine to the ancestors, the king prays for national security and prosperity as well as happiness for the royal family. At this time, all *Heongwans* (supporters for offering rituals) and officiants prostrate and bow four times. For *Aheonrye* (亞獻禮, the second offering), the crown prince offers the second cup of wine (Cho & Kim, 2005). *Jongheonrye* (終獻禮, the third offering) is progressively performed by the prime minister. These procedures—featuring three separate offerings—imply that the ancestral rite was conducted with the utmost sincerity on the part of the king, royal family, and all other officiants participating in the services (Choi & Noh, 2009). It is not the end. The last procedure involves sending off the spirits to heaven. All the officials initially take part *Eumbok* (飲福, receiving the blessing of god), sharing the food and wine that were once served to the ancestors.¹⁴ The *Choheongwan* and other officiants bow four times to send off the spirits in the procedure of *Songshinrye* (送神禮, farewell to the spirits) (Cho & Kim, 2005).¹⁵ Based on Confucian *Samjae* thought, the royal performers would assume that the ancestral spirits who visited *Jongmyo* would return to heaven as the smokes from the white ramie and incense rose up during the final procedure (Choi & Noh, 2009).¹⁶

Moreover, it has been suggested that the king's costume of "Myeonbok" (冕服) likewise contains the Confucian symbol of the Five Elements (冕服五行: metal, wood, water, fire, and earth) for the state ritual. The royal robe, made of silk fabrics, is reddish black outside and purple inside. Six different symbols are embroidered on the robe: the sun, the moon, dragons, five mountains, fire, and pheasants. Inside the round sun embroidered on each shoulder are three-legged birds, while rabbits or toads are embroidered inside the round moon. Dragons and pheasants are drawn on both sleeves (Choi & Noh, 2009).¹⁷ The sun, moon, and stars signify heaven, while the mountains, earth, dragons, and pheasants represent rain and clouds. The color of the skirt is rosy pink. On both sides, the front of the robe is embroidered with another six symbols: wine barrels (eternity), water chestnuts (cleanliness), fire (brightness), rice grains (feeding the people), axes (decisiveness), and a crenellated pattern (constancy) (Song, 2008; Keum, 2009). *Husu* (後綬) refers to the skirt's tasseled rear trimmings, which are embroidered with red flowers.¹⁸ The tassels feature six colors—yellow, white, red, reddish black, orange, and green—symbolizing the four directions or four seasons (Choi & Noh, 2009).

Regarding sacred foods, the *Jongmyo Uigwe* (宗廟儀軌, *Record of the Rite to Royal Ancestors*, written in 1697) elaborates on four kinds of cooked grains, five kinds of rice cakes, five kinds of fruits, two kinds of dried seasoned meat, four kinds of pickled seafood, seven kinds of meat dishes, four kinds of pickled vegetables, three kinds of unseasoned soups, three kinds of seasoned soups, and the usual sauces (song, 2008; Yi, 2018).¹⁹ Joseon's royal *Jongmyo* philosophy maintains that uncooked food items, dried foods, and red food items can be considered as "Yang" foods, while dead food items, watery foods, and white items symbolize "Yin." The royal ritual of *Jongmyo Jerye*, like *Sajik Jerye*, also meaningfully arranges raw fruits (e.g., almonds, dates, and chestnuts), dried items of meat or fish, and red food items on the right side of the ritual table. Meanwhile, white food items, fermented foods, pickled vegetables, and any watery items are set on the left side (Choi & Noh, 2009; National Palace Museum of Korea, 2012).²⁰ Thus, the Confucian Yin-Yang theory (陰陽說) plays the most important role in determining how and where the fruits, as well as other ritual food items, were arranged on the ritual table.²¹

4. *Jongmyo Jerye-ak*

The *Jongmyo Jerye* (ritual) is performed with *Jerye-ak* (宗廟祭禮樂: musical performance) accompanied by the three elements of *Akki* (instrument), *Akjang* (song), and *Ilmu* (dance) (Hwan-jik Kang, 2009; Joh, 2013).²² This raises a new question: how does the sacred court music of the Joseon dignify the practice of royal ancestral worship? The performing arts component is divided into two groups based on the location where they play and the kinds of instruments that they play. Here, *Deungga* (登歌) refers to the orchestra positioned on the upper terrace of *Jeongjeon* (上月臺) to play music without lyrics, while *Heonga* (軒架) refers to

the group playing music with lyrics on the lower terrace (下月臺) (Hwang & Baek, 2003). These two musical groups are interpreted as the two cosmic forces in balance: Deungga stands for Yang while Heonga stands for Yin (Song, 2008).

In detail, the musical instruments (Akki) of the orchestral ensemble are produced from the eight materials of East Asian cosmology: metal, stone, silk, bamboo, gourd, earth, leather, and wood (Song, 2008, pp. 18–20). They are divided into three types of official instruments: A-akki (雅樂器, instruments for court music), Dang-akki (唐樂器, instruments from Tang dynasty China), and Hyang-akki (鄉樂器, instruments made in local or non-Chinese foreign countries) (National Palace Museum of Korea, 2014; Song, 2008). The *Pyeonjong* (編鐘) is an instrument with bronze bells. Eight metal bells hang in each upper and lower section, and they are played with a Chae (a stick made of ox horn). The *Peongyeong* (編磬) has sixteen stone bells that are played with a Gaktoe (a stick made of ox horn) (Song, 2008).²³ The rhythms of the *Pyeonjong* and *Peongyeong*, according to Song, are assumed to feature the Confucian concepts of Yin and Yang (陰陽) and the Five Elements (五行) (Choi & Noh, 2009; Song, 2008).²⁴

The second element of Akjang (樂章) refers to the verses or words in court music songs, while songs sung in Jerye-ak are called Jongmyo Akjang (Joh, 2013). The Akjang can be traced back to eleven pieces in Botaepyeong (保太平) and fifteen pieces in Jeongdaeop (定大業) authored by King Sejong, the fourth king of the Joseon dynasty (Hwang & Baek, 2003). The Joseon Akjang then changed from the informal Chinese-poem style into a more formal style, given that the original Akjang were composed for court parties, not for ancestral rituals (Choi & Noh, 2009; Yao, 2000).²⁵ In 1464, the 10th year of King Sejo's reign, the Akjang form was developed as a result of royal concerns (Chang-Soo, 2001; Hwang, 2002; Moon, 2016; Song, 2001)²⁶:

It does not seem right that though our ancestors listened to Korean *hyangak* while alive, we play Chinese *a-ak* for their memorial rites. Although we cannot say that all Korean music is good, we should be ashamed to compare it with that of China, as not all Chinese music is good. The verses were made of refined Chinese literature, from which they could feel the specific literal tastes of the Korean Chinese literature.

The Akjang featured in Botaepyeong has the character of Yang and is comprised of verses favorably accounting how the founding kings built a glorious country. The verses also extol the civil achievements of the direct ancestors of the Founding King (Mokjo, Ikjo, Dojo, and Hwanjo) and Kings Taejo and Taejong (Hwan-jik Kang, 2009). These pieces are played during Choheonrye when the first cup of wine is offered to the spirits. The Botaepyeong is comprised, in total, of eleven music pieces with eleven verses (Hwan-jik Kang, 2009).²⁷ In contrast, the Akjang featured in Jeongdaeop has the character of Yin and begins with the verse—“Heaven helped the founding kings in building the nation and achieving military exploits.” The verses use poetic language to extol how bravely the founding kings stood against alien forces to save the country and achieve exploits (Hwan-jik Kang, 2009). These royal songs are sung during Aheonrye and Jongheonrye rites.²⁸ Hwang maintains that all the numbers applied in performing the Akjangs of Botaepyeong and Jeongdaeop originate from the Xicichuan (繫辭傳, a commentary of sixty-four hexagrams symbolizing the pattern of existence and change of humanity and nature) in the Confucian *I Ching* or *Yijing* (易經, *Book of Changes*) (Hwang, 2002).

The historical text *Chunqui zuoshichuan* (春秋左氏傳, the Zuo Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals, 700 BCE–450 BCE) describes the practice of Ilmu (佾舞, line dance), the third element of Jerye-ak (Hwang, 2002). The slow-moving ritual dance was previously imported from the Song dynasty of China (1114), and it was first introduced into the Joseon dynasty for court parties during the days of King Sejong. However, King Sejo—as in the case of the Akjang—uniquely began using the Chinese dance for Jongmyo Jerye (Confucian rite) (Chang-Soo, 2001). The word “Il” refers to a line where the body of the dancer is the center. To invoke the spirits, Ilmu was performed by a group of sixty-four dancers into eight per each line and row; thus these are often

referred to as Palilmu (八佾舞, the dance of eight people dancing in each time).²⁹ Ilmu consists of two types: Munmu and Mumu (Hwang & Baek, 2003; Byoung-ok Lee, 2008). Joh argues that Confucian ideas and elements regarding time and space are used in the rotation and symmetry of the dance, which connote the structure of the *I Ching* or *Yijing* (Joh, 2013). Of these two, Munmu (文舞) is a dance performed in praise of the meritorious civil achievements of former kings. Accompanied by the music of Botaepyeong-ji-ak, dancers dance holding a Yak (a three-holed bamboo flute) in their left hands and a jeok (a pheasant-feather tasseled wooden bar) in their right hands, reflecting the balance and harmony of Yin and Yang (Hwang, 2002; Nelson, 2011). According to the *Akhak Gwebeom* (樂學軌範, court music code), the Munmu dance is performed by thirty-six of the thirty-eight musician members, wearing hat gears called “jinhyeongwan” (進賢冠), purple silk gowns, and black-rimmed skirts (Choi & Noh, 2009; Hwang, 2002).³⁰

What about the Mumu (武舞)? It is another form of sacred dance used to extol the military exploits of past kings. There are no fixed formal movements, but the casual dance is accompanied by the music of Jeongdaeop-ji-ak, with dancers holding wooden swords, spears, bows, and arrows (Choi & Noh, 2009).³¹ The orchestra is comprised of seventy-one musicians who wear leather hat gears and the same costumes as are used for Botaepyeong. Of the total number of musicians, thirty-six take part in the dance while the remaining thirty-five function as the honor guards of the dancing group, carrying gak, duk, buk, jing, sora, and multi-colored flags (Hwang & Baek, 2003).³² The ritual dancers are required to make strong, quick movements to emblematically depict “a sweet-fish swimming against a rapid stream” along with fencing motions (Hwang, 2002, p. 238). The dance intends not only to please the officiants who are present but also to entertain the spirits and gods in order to move heaven to bless the country and its people. As the accompanying music (Akjang) alternates between Botaepyeong and Jeongdaeop, the dual characters of the two dances (Munmu and Mumu) change because the attributes of Munmu are symbolic of Yang while those of Mumu are representative of Yin (Hwang & Baek, 2003; Joh, 2013).

5. Architecture

Jongmyo buildings, which represent a model of traditional wooden architecture, are set in valleys and surrounded by low hills with some artificial additions (Han & Park, 2002; cf. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/738>).³³ Do these state buildings also connote the Confucian elements and the theory of divination based on geomantic topography? If so, how can this be verified? The *Annals of King Taejo* (太祖實錄) illustrates that royal shrines are typically located in auspicious places, referred to as a “golden hen sitting on eggs” in the Feng-shui understanding of landscape (Han & Park, 2002; Han et al., 2017). A geomagnetic investigation of Jongmyo confirms that the values of *Toekan* (the space near *Hyeol* (穴, the geomancy cave)³⁴) are relatively high. Additionally, Han and Park interpreted the site of Jongmyo buildings as located in the *Hyeol*.³⁵ In more detail, the Eungbong Mountain (應峰山) in Seoul is the main mountain representing the black turtle of Jongmyo. The Inwang Mountain (應仁王山) is the range that encircles Jongmyo on the right side of the main mountain, symbolizing the Jongmyo as a white tiger. The Naksan (駱山, rocky mountain) is the hill that encircles the Jongmyo on the left, representing the azure dragon of the Jongmyo. The Namsan (南山, South Mountain) is the mountain that faces the Jongmyo. Since the black turtle (Eungbong Mountain) is metaphorically turned towards the end of the dragon (Naksan), vital energy rises from the dragon (mountain) and moves to the end of the mountain where the *Hyeol* is located (Han & Park, 2002; Lee, 2014).³⁶ Thus, the two geomancy experts assert that the space and location of the mountain are associated with the quality of the available energy. In this way, Jongmyo is depicted to receive strong vital energy. The royal religiosity based on Confucian philosophy and related to the concepts of Samjae thought, Ye (courtesy), Hyo (filial piety), and Chung (loyalty), was also metaphysically applied in the architectural structures of the Jeongjeon, Yeongnyeongjeon, Chilsadang (七祀堂), and Gongsindang (功臣堂), and Gongminwang Sindang shrines (恭愍王神堂) (Kim & Lim, 2001).

Jeongjeon, the main hall of the royal Jongmyo, is where the spirit tablets of Joseon kings and queens are located. At 109 meters (357 feet) in length, this building is considered the longest single wooden structure in the world (Byeongsu Park & Jeongae, 2011).³⁷ Each of the gates leading into the chambers has double doors. However, these two doors do not fit perfectly—one is slightly misshapen, which creates a small opening. A thin, triangular piece of wood attached to the door ensures that they cannot be tightly closed. All sides of the *Jeongjeon* (and *Yeongnyeongjeon*) except the front are covered with bricks, allowing no light inside, but a crack suggests the coming and going of the spirits of the deceased. The sides and ceiling of each chamber (神室) are enclosed with a yellow curtain. In between each chamber, a screen is used as a partition. Each chamber of the main shrine is made of seamless boards (Ji, 2000; Lee, 2017). The *Sinju* (神主, chestnut tablet), containing the spirit of the deceased, is 13.5 centimeters wide and 27.9 centimeters high. The tablet has a rectangular shape with a rounded top. The front board contains a hole (Gyu, 窺), through which the Joseon royal family believed that spirits can enter and leave (Lee, 2012; Kwalliso, 2009).³⁸

The *Jeongjeon* compound has three gates. The south gate (神門) is for the passage of spirits, and it connects to the spirit chamber (Kim & Lim, 2001). The east gate is for the king and officiants, while the west gate is for ritual performers (i.e., musicians and dancers). Entering through the south gate leads into a dark grey (almost black) elevated passage called *Sinro* (spirit pathway, 神路), which starts at the *Jongmyo*'s main gate and leads to *Jeongjeon* and *Yeongnyeongjeon* (Choi & Noh, 2009; Palmer, 1984). There is a pathway called *Eoro* (御路) between the stairways from the lower terrace to the upper terrace on the east end, typically used by the king. *Sejaro* (世子路) is the other side of the *Eoro* pathway, reserved for the crown prince (Cho & Kim, 2005).³⁹ A stone fence is erected in a square pattern around *Jeongjeon*. The tile-roofed high fence imbues *Jeongjeon* with a more solemn and magnificent appearance. The massive stone courtyard, known as a *woldae* (月臺), is divided into the upper terrace (上月臺) and the lower terrace (下月臺). Among the three stairs located between the two *woldaes*, the central stair is called *Taegae* (泰階) and it is reserved for ancestral spirits (Cho & Kim, 2005). The stairs toward the upper terrace are inscribed with a cloud pattern, suggesting that the nursery was a heavenly space (Cho & Kim, 2005; Palmer, 1984; Park & Kim, 2015; Tu et al., 1990). This type of structure, featuring the beauty of Korean classical architecture and construction techniques, is distinctively different from buildings of this kind in Han China, where the institution of *Jongmyo* began.⁴⁰

The second major build (*Yeongnyeongjeon*, 永寧殿) was erected in 1421 under King Sejong for the Confucian values of *Ye* (courtesy) and *Hyo* (filial piety). The sacred hall originally featured ten spirit chambers for the relocation of King Taejo's ancestors (Mokjo 穆祖, Ikjo 翼祖, Dojo 祖, and Hwanjo 桓祖) (Choi & Noh, 2009; Lee, 2004). The spirit tablets for four generations of the Founding King's ancestors are held inside the center of each chamber. After their deaths, posthumously crowned kings are enshrined in the chambers to the east and west of the building.⁴¹ *Gongminwang Sindang* (恭愍王神堂) was a small shrine honoring King Gongmin (1330–1374) and his wife, *Nogukdaejang Gongju* (國大長公主, *Budashiri*, 國大長公主), a princess from Mongolia. The painting depicting a divine horse found in this building is known to have been painted by King Gongmin himself, as it is well-known that he was a talented artist and painter. During his reign (1351–1374), he implemented sweeping reforms and severed the relationship with the weak Yuan dynasty through the political actions of removing all pro-Mongol aristocrats and military officers from their positions.⁴² His actions, though temporally, restored power and territory to the Goryeo dynasty. It is still a mystery for a king of the Goryeo dynasty to be enshrined in the supreme shrine of the Joseon dynasty. Nonetheless, this phenomenon can be considered as the royal action of *Ye* (courtesy); in other words, honoring this king for what he achieved during his reign (or considering the international relationship with Mongolia).⁴³

The east of Jeongjeon features Gongsindang (功臣堂), although the previous Goryeo dynasty featured it at Buddhist temples. The so-called *Hall of Meritorious Officials* (配享功臣), like the western wing of Ming's Tiao Miao hall for worship of ancestors, enshrines the tablets of ninety-four meritorious subjects in the context of Chung (loyalty).⁴⁴ These were subjects who assisted the enshrined kings and queens (Lee, 2005; Park & Kim, 2015).⁴⁵ The building, originally containing three chambers, has been expanded to sixteen chambers. The design of Gongsindang is generally artless and plain, especially when compared to Jeongjeon and Yeongnyeongjeon. Among the thirty-five kings enshrined in the Jongmyo, the ancestors of the Founding King (Taejo)—including Mokjo, Ikjo, Dojo, Hwanjo, and Crown Prince Uimin—did not have meritorious officials, while the rest of the thirty kings generally had three each. The kings of Jeongjeon had two to seven officials, while the kings of Yeongnyeongjeon had only one or two officials (Lee, 2005; Kwalliso, 2009).

The west of Jeongjeon features Chilsadang (七祀堂) as a place of prayer and worship. The shrine contains the spirit tablets for the seven gods of heaven and earth. The gods enshrined are often seen as the guardians of Jeongjeon (Choi & Noh, 2009; cf. <http://www.dap.sa.kr/blog/?p=8657>). These include the gods of “gates” (國門之神, Gungmun jisin), “entrances and exits” (司戶之神, Saojo jisin), “reward and punishment” (司命之神, Samyeong jisin), “halls and residency” (中霽之神, Jungnyu jisin), “kitchens and food” (司竈之神, Sajo jisin), “roads” (國行之神, Gukaeng jisin), and “feudal lords who died of diseases without children” (公厲之神, Gongnyeo jisin) (Cho & Kim, 2005). These different types of gods are worshipped according to the seasons: the gods of “reward and punishment” and “entrances and exits” during the spring, the gods of “kitchens and food” and “halls and residency” during the summer, the gods of “gates” and “feudal lords” during the autumn, and the god of “roads” during the winter. The ritual of the seven gods followed Confucian philosophy (the zodiac system of four seasons) as well as folk religious practices (Cho & Kim, 2005).

6. Conclusion

The Korean peninsula has always been independent, but Chinese culture and its political influence have often been transmitted into the Korean society throughout history. Similarly, the Confucian philosophy prospered in the Joseon dynasty of East Asia as the state religion after the Vietnamese revival during the 15th century—the “golden age” of Emperor Lý Thánh Tông (Kim & Lim, 2001; cf. <http://www.sacredtexts.com/asia/rsv/rsv06.htm>)—but before the Edo Japan (1600–1868) (Abe, 1965; Ansart, 1998; Boot, 1983). The state philosophy, in turn, transformed Korea's legal principles and moral system. The royal aspirations of the Joseon dynasty are symbolically illustrated in the establishment of the Jongmyo, the oldest royal shrine. The Confucian legacy was re-creatively adopted to enhance the national values that are depicted in the *Fundamental Bonds* (三綱), particularly Gunwi Singang (君爲臣綱, subjects are essential to serving the king)⁴⁶ and Buwi Jagang (父爲子綱, the son is fundamental to serving the father). Moreover, the Samjae thought regarding ancestral spirits and the gods of heaven and earth is connoted in the Jongmyo Jerye (ritual), royal costume, and sacred food.

The Jerye-ak (musical performance)'s three elements of Akki (instrument), Akjang (song), and Ilmu (dance) reflect the fundamental teachings of the Yin-Yang and Five Elements theory. Meanwhile, the politico-cultural sites of Jeongjeon, Yeongnyeongjeon, King Gongmin shrine, Chilsadang, and Gongsindang exhibited the comprehensive application of the geomantic principles (Feng-shui), Ye (courtesy), Hyo (filial piety), and Chung (loyalty). Thus, the royal religiosity of Jongmyo culture and society, which originally emerged out of the Han tradition (206 BCE–220 CE), centered its national pride around Neo-Confucian beliefs, while Buddhism and Daoism were often scorned by the government authorities and dominant yangban (=aristocracy) society. The ideology⁴⁷ of the state religion that spread throughout the Sino-Asian communities was not only the standard for intellectuals in Joseon (modern Korea),⁴⁸ but also the driving force behind the last dynasty of Korea for over five hundred years (1392–1910).⁴⁹

Funding

The authors received no direct funding for this research.

Author details

David W. Kim¹
E-mail: davidwj_kim@yahoo.co.uk
ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7317-8617>
Won-Il Bang¹
¹ Australian National University & Kookmin University, Australia.

Citation information

Cite this article as: *Royal religiosity: Confucian thoughts in Joseon Jongmyo shrine*, David W. Kim & Won-Il Bang, *Cogent Social Sciences* (2021), 7: 1970426.

Notes

1. This paper presents the first attempt to analyze the royal Korean Jongmyo from a religio-philosophical perspective; prior studies have only been conducted focusing on the subjects of architecture (2001, 2002, 2005, and 2017), tourism (2001, 2002, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2018), heritage studies (1990, 2009, 2017, and 2018), photography (2009), and performing art (2016). The Revised Romanization (RR) of Korean has been applied throughout the paper, unless McCunne-Reischauer Romanization is indicated. It is supported by Korea Foundation (KF, Korean government) as well as the Academy of Korean Studies (AKS), Seoul.
2. The definition of “religion” in western understanding generally indicates a group which has deity(ies), leader, canon, regular meeting, ritual, and doctrine, etc. Is Confucianism a religion? It is often controversial if one tries to apply those basic components. However, the Chinese tradition or philosophy of human values, from a different approach of belief, has a ceremonial and regular rituals within the concepts of ancestor spirits.
3. Government and education were the main focuses of Confucian thought, albeit with some application to family roles and responsibilities, especially rituals of ancestor worship (or ancestor memorial rituals).
4. Breuker disagrees with this view. See Remco Breuker, *Establishing a Pluralist Society in Medieval Korea, 918–1170: History, Ideology, and Identity in the Koryŏ Dynasty* (Leiden, Brill, 2010).
5. The practice of Feng-shui involves interpreting the expressions of nature and feeling the Gi-ki (地氣, earthly energy) from those expressions.
6. Buddhism used to be popular with the upper classes of the Goryeo dynasty, but in Joseon, it was mainly practiced privately by women in palace. The Sogyeokjoen’s (昭格殿) Taeiljeon (太一殿) and Samcheongjeon (三清殿) were also officially operated as Daoist office till 1518.
7. This is the national worship place for earth-based gods.
8. Chilgung (七宮, a Confucian shrine for seven biological mothers of kings) additionally emerged during the reign of King Youngjo (1670–1718). For the legal details of Jongmyo, *Jeonyul Tongbo* (典律通補, legislation of Joseon written in 1786) mentioned 39 times. *Gyeongguk Daejeon* (경국대전, the State Code) also demonstrates the origins of the state Neo-Confucianism in Joseon and development of royal rites.
9. The supreme deity is Sangje (上帝), the god of heaven (天神), includes the gods of holy nature (sun, moon, and stars). The god of earth (地神) refers to gods of land, grain, mountains, rivers, and the sea. The god of humans (人神) represents gods of ancestors including those of Confucius, ancient sages, kings, and national heroes.
10. They additionally had the Western and Eastern Wings for the memorial tablets of meritorious courtiers and princes of Manchu origin in the Qing dynasty enshrined.
11. Some 200 selected members of the royal family and the queen’s descendants were appointed to perform the sacrifices and serve as royal stewards.
12. Hyangdaechong is a storage room for ritual papers, incense, and offerings.
13. As the number of chambers was increased, King Jungjo reduced the number of steps in the Jongmyo ritual. Yeongnyeongjeon (永寧殿) contains sixteen chambers holding thirty-four tablets.
14. They then symbolically wash their hands to purify their minds and bodies in order to greet the spirits. The ritual for greeting the ancestral spirits and various gods from heaven and earth begins with *Shingwanrye* (晨禱禮).
15. The raw livers of cows, pigs, and sheeps are mixed with millet in oil and then burned altogether with mugwort.
16. The Cheonbyeondu (撤饗豆, gathering sacrificial bowls) represents the time to remove all foods.
17. *Mangryorye* (望燎禮, incineration of the ritual articles except foods) refers to the moment when the prayer papers are burned. At this time, the king receives a report from the Heongwan and Daechukgwan that the rituals and services have been completed and all the officiants have withdrawn.
18. For the Jongmyo Jerye, there are sixty-three kinds of vessels. They are called as “Jegi (祭器)” and they are made of bamboo, wood, and brass. Among them, Byeon (made of bamboo) represents “Yang,” and holds dried sacrificial foods. On the left side of each spiritual tablet, two Byeons are set vertically with another six set horizontally. Dried sacrificial foods—such as ginkgo nuts, hazelnuts, chestnuts, dried jujubes, dried codfish slices, salt, various kinds of rice cakes, dried deer meat slices, and walnuts—are offered sequentially from the right. Meanwhile, Du (made of wood) represents “Yin” and holds wet sacrificial foods. On the right side of each spiritual tablet, two Du(s) are set vertically with another six set horizontally. Wet sacrificial foods—such as Korean pan cake, round rice cake, boiled tripe of ox’s stomach, pickled yellow croaker, bamboo shoots, pickled hare meat, parsley, venison, radish leaves, boiled beef in soy sauce, and scallions—are offered from the right. The rest of the vessels (sixty-one) are made of bronze. Each vessel, according to the *Gukjo Orye* (國朝五禮, *Five Rites of State*), has a noble shape and a particular meaning. These vessels represent a delicate state of harmony in accordance with the traditional theory of heaven-earth-humanity.
19. The length of the robe is designed so as not to hide the six symbols on the skirt.
20. Moreover, two gold rings hang on the tassels.
21. The food offering is not as various or large for ordinary ancestor memorial rituals, but it still holds its Confucian meaning. For Jeongjeon (正殿), one cow, seven sheeps, and four pigs were typically offered. One cow, one sheep, and one pig were given as offerings for Yeongnyeongjeon.
22. Dates are always displayed on the right side of the ritual table.
23. There is a vast classification of items as either “Yin” or “Yang.” There are a few rules on how to classify

- items in the realm of “Yin” (including earth, moon, west, north, death, gods, spirits, white, water, and left). Things classified as “Yang” include heaven, sun, east, south, things that are raw or alive, devils, soul, things that are red, fire, right, and things that are dried.
24. Kang divided the Jongmyo Jerye-ak into five areas: music, instrumentation, movement, ideas, and dancing.
 25. Like in the Pyengjong, a thicker stone bell makes a higher sound and vice versa.
 26. The *Teukjong* (特鐘) was used at the beginning of musical performance. Meanwhile, the *Chuk* (祝), symbolizing the spring, was placed on the east side of the performing group, where a musician ram a long stick into the hole to mark the start of a musical performance. Placed on the west side, the *Eo* (敔) would signal the end of the music. The *Teukgyeong* (特馨) is a single L-shaped stone chime. The single stone chime proclaims the end of a performance. The *Jeolgo* (節鼓) is a medium barrel drum. The *Hwi* is a flag signifying the start and end of Jongmyo Jeryeak. The *Eo* (敔) represents a tiger; thus, after the tiger's neck is beaten three times by a bamboo stick, saw teeth are scraped three times on the tiger's back. The *Banghyang* (方響) features sixteen iron rectangles in two rows of eight that hang in a carved stand. The slabs are identical in shape and size but vary in thickness. The *Bak* (拍) has been used since the period of the Three Kingdoms to signal the start and end of a concert. The *Janggo* (杖鼓) is a rhythm instrument. The left side of this instrument, made of thicker leather, produces heavy tones. However, the right side is made of relatively thinner leather and is able to produce light tones. The *Ajaeng* (牙箏) is a seven-string instrument. Strings are rubbed with a stick to create sounds. The *Taepyeongso* (太平簫) specializes in creating strong and high tones. It has been generally used not only for Jongmyo Jeryeak, but also for Pungmulnori (The Korean folk music) and Buddhist music as well.
 27. Choi Hang newly wrote verses for Jinchan, Cheolbyeon and Songsin to give form to the current Jongmyo Akjang.
 28. King Sejong (with official Park Yong) composed new music for the ritual based largely on hyangak and Gochiak (with some dangak) in 1447 and 1462.
 29. The eleven musical pieces of Botaepyeong are Hwimun (太平簫), Gimyeong (基命), Gwiin (歸仁), Hyeong-ga (享壽), Jipnyeong (輯寧), Yungghwa (隆化), Hyeonmi (顯美), Yongwang-jeongyeong (龍光貞明), Junggwang (重光), Daeyu (大猷), and Yeokseong (續成). Botaepyeong (保太平) follows the form of Hwangjonggung Pyunjo (黃种宮平調). The scales of Hwangjonggung Pyeongjo are Hwangjong—Taejoo—Jungyeol—Endangered—Namdo, finishing with Hwangjong.
 30. The Jeongdaeeop, likewise, is made up of eleven musical pieces: Somu (昭武), Dokgyeong (篤慶), Takjeong (濯征), Seonwi (宣威), Sinjeong (神定), Buneum (奮雄), Suneum (順應), Chongsu (龍綬), Jeongse (靖世), Hyeokjeong (赫整), and Yeosngwan (永觀). Jeongdaeeop (定大業) follows the form of Hwangjongguk interweave (黃种宮體調). The scales of the Hwangjongguk interweave are Hwangjong—Syojong—Sajeong—Endangered—Trade, finishing with Hwangjong.
 31. “Pal” means eight. However, originally the dance was referred to as Yukilmu (yuk means six) and performed by thirty-six dancers, as this was the proper form for a king. Starting with the establishment of the Empire of Daehan (1897), Palmu was performed to display the status of an emperor.
 32. They also wear red belts, white cotton traditional socks, and black leather shoes. The main motive is calmness and peace, as if “the moon moves through clouds.” The primary dance movement figuratively mirrors that of “a docile sheep movements”, starting with a smooth left turn with hands and legs raised and then shifting into a stooping movement. The dance is performed during the royal rituals of Chwiwi (Yeongsin), Shingwanrye (Jeonpye), and Choheonrye.
 33. The dance is performed during the rituals of Aheonrye and Jongheonrye.
 34. The basic movement is a right turn with right arms raised and stretching bodies. The movement of “up and down,” “left and right,” and “front and back,” are also present in the Chinese concept of “Yang and Yin.”
 35. The Neo-Confucian philosophy of the Joseon dynasty does not primarily emphasize Feng-shui, but it is undeniable that the theory of geomantic topography is generally practiced.
 36. The term, *Hyeol* (穴, the geomancy cave) refers to a spot where human beings can most efficiently tap into the power of the invisible channels of vital energy flowing below.
 37. The Chinese Daoist *feng shui* is often called as *Pungsu-jiri* (風水地理) in Korea, referring to the study of the earthly patterns of wind and water. *Pungsu-jiri* philosophy rests on the assumption that harmony between the geographical features of one's immediate surroundings like mountains, lakes, and land, all affect the condition of human health and happiness.
 38. This is interpreted as the dragon (mountain) delivering vital energy to the *Hyeol*.
 39. Two kinds of trees are mainly used for Jeongjeon and Yeongnyeongjeon: the fir tree and *Pinus densiflora*.
 40. The king's tablet is situated in the west, while the queen's tablet is in the east.
 41. There are three ponds, so called “Jidang” in the royal shrine of Jongmyo. The round islet located at the center of the square pond represents the Confucian beliefs that heaven is round and that the earth is flat. Likewise, the road of Jongmyo is divided into a white stone road and a black tile road. While the stone road partly leads to Jeongjeon, the black tile road indicates a direction for spirits and kings, who are the central players of the sacrificial rituals.
 42. This topic is beyond the scope of this paper, but see Jeong-Sik Cho and Beo-Dle Kim, 2005, “The Study on the Patterns and Characters in Roads of Jongmyo Architecture,” *The Architectural Institute of Korea*, 21 (4): 147–154. Hwa Yeol Choi, and Haeun Noh, 2009, “A Study on Cultural and Historical Characteristics of Jongmyo Shrine and Jongmyo Ancestral Rite as a UNESCO World Heritage,” *Journal of Photo Geography (Sajin Chiri)* 19 (4): 27–40.
 43. Including Jeongjong 定宗 (2nd monarch), Munjong 文宗 (5th), Danjong 文宗 (6th), Deokjong 德宗, Yejong 睿宗 (8th), Injong 仁宗 (12th), Myeongjong 明宗 (13th), and Jangjo 元宗 (Lee 2008).
 44. Yuan China was defeated by rebels who eventually established a new dynasty in China called the Ming. King Gongmin is depicted to be able to operate independently of the Mongol's Yuan dynasty

because he did not have a Mongol mother, unlike his immediate predecessors and secondly, the Yuan were preoccupied with trying to stay in power in China despite the popular uprising against their rule.

45. There are two oral traditions regarding this. One is that his enshrinement helped legitimize the newly founded dynasty. The second is that a portrait of the Goryeo king blowing about in the wind happened to fall into the court of Jongmyo while it was being built, so it was decided that the portrait should be enshrined.
46. There were hundreds of meritorious officials in the early decades of Joseon even though they were not enshrined in the Gongsindang.
47. See the record of on 26 July 1410 at the 20th Book of the Taejong Fairy King's Book (太宗恭定大王實錄), contained in the *Joseon Dynasty Annals* (朝鮮王朝實錄, *Joseon Wangjo Sillok*).
48. The statement means that there is fundamental obligation of subjects to treat their rulers as a ruler should be treated.
49. Nowadays, the descendants of the Yi royal family, with the government agency, less but regularly perform the Jongmyo ritual two times a year (first Saturday, May (end of spring) and first Sunday, November (end of autumn)) in terms of conserving the UNESCO World Heritage and its tradition. The sacred site attracts pilgrims and visitors.

References

- Abe, Y. (1965). *Nihon Shushigaku to Chōsen*. Tōkyō daigaku shuppansha.
- Allan, S. (2011). What is a Shu 書? *EASCM Newsletter*, 4, 1–5.
- Allan, S. (2012). On Shu 書 (Documents) and the Origin of the Shang shu 尚書 (Ancient Documents) in Light of Recently Discovered Bamboo Slip Manuscripts. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 75(3), 547–557. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X12000547>
- Ansart, O. (1998). *L'empire Du Rite: La Pensée Politique d'Ogyū Sorai*. Librairie Droz.
- Bellah, R. (1985). *Tokugawa religion: The cultural roots of modern Japan*. The Free Press.
- Billioud, S., & Thoraval, J. (2015). *The sage and the People: The confucian revival in China*. Oxford University Press.
- Boot, W. J. (1983). W. J. Boot. *The adoption and adaptation of neo-confucianism in Japan: The role of Fujiwara Seika and Hayashi Razan*. Leiden.
- Cartwright, M. "Confucianism in Ancient Korea." Last modified July 24, 2018. World History Encyclopedia. <https://www.ancient.eu/article/969/confucianism-in-ancient-korea/>.
- Cho, J. H. (2001). Hangungmunhwa: Uri narau i jesa-munhwawa jongmyodaeje [A Culture of Sacrificial Rite and a Great Rite of the Shrine of Royal Ancestors in Korea]. *Korean Thought and Culture*, 12, 312–336.
- Cho, J.-S., & Kim, B.-D. (2005). Jongmyo girui yuhyeong min geonchukjeong teukjingje gwanhan yeongu [The Study on the Patterns and Characters in Roads of Jongmyo Architecture]. *The Architectural Institute of Korea*, 21(4), 147–154.
- Choi, H. Y., & Noh, H. (2009). Yuneseuko segyeyusan-oseo jongmyowa jongmyojeryeui munhwa, yeoksa-jeong teukjingje daehan gochal [A study on cultural and historical characteristics of Jongmyo Shrine and Jongmyo Ancestral Rite as a UNESCO world heritage]. *Journal of Photo Geography (Sajin Chiri)*, 19(4), 27–40. DOI:10.35149/jakpg.2009.19.4.003
- "Cultural Heritage Sites." Last modified July 26, 2018. http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/CU/CU_EN_8_5_5_1.jsp.
- Dawson, F. (2018). "World Heritage Site." Last modified July 26, 2018. <https://www.worldheritagesite.org/list/Jongmyo+Shrine>
- De, B., Theodore, W., & Chan, W.-T. (1960). *Sources of Chinese Tradition: Volume I*. Columbia University Press.
- Deuchler, M. (1992). *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology*. Harvard University Asia Center, Harvard University Press.
- Deuchler, M. (2015). *Under the ancestors' eyes: Kinship, status, and locality in premodern Korea*. Harvard University Press.
- Ebrey, P. B. (1991). *Confucianism and the Family Rituals in Imperial China*. Princeton University Press.
- Elman, B., Duncan, J., & Ooms, H. (2002). *Rethinking confucianism: Past and present in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam*. UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series.
- Feuchtwang, S. (2016). Chinese religions. In L. Woodhead, H. Kawanami, & C. H. Partridge (Eds.), *Religions in the modern world: Traditions and transformations* (3rd ed. ed., pp. 143–172). Routledge.
- Fung, Y.-M. (2008). Problematizing contemporary confucianism in East Asia. In J. Richey (Ed.), *Teaching Confucianism* (pp. 193–234). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195311600.001.0001>
- Han, G.-S., Lee, C. H., Hong, M., & Kim, E. J. (2017). Segyemunhwayusan jongmyoui siksaeng gyeonggwang bojoneul wihan yeongu [A study on the preservation of the vegetation Landscape of Jongmyo, a world heritage site]. *Journal of the Korean Institute of Traditional Landscape Architecture: International Edition Number*, 15, 23–35. DOI: 10.14700/KITLA.2017.15.023
- Han, H. (2000). "Myeongjidaehakgyo sahakgwa changseol 20 junyeonginyeom teukjim: Hanguksapyeon; joseonchogi jongmyoui onyojewa jehyanguisigui seongnim - jongmyo, yeongnyeongjeon, munsojeon jehyangui chajjeomeul jungsimeuro [Jongmyo Rites of Early Joseon: Jeongjeon, Yeongnyeongjeon, and Munsojeon]." *Journal for the Historical Theory of Myeongji (Myeongjisaron= Studies of History from Myeongji University)*, 12, 315–360.
- Han, H.-J. (2017). Joseonsidae guggajesaeseoui thuisaengt sayonggwa geu uyeong [Review on the Use and the Operation of the sacrifice of the national rites in the Joseon Dynasty]. *The Journal of Korean Historical-Forklife*, 52, 48–59.
- Han, J.-K., & Park, T.-S. (2002). A study on the site analysis of Jongmyo area, with Feng-Shui theory and geomagnetic field. *The International Journal of the Korean Institute of Ecological Architecture and Environment*, 2(4), 41–47.
- Hsü, D.-L. (1970-1971). The myth of the 'five human relations. *Monumenta Serica*, 29(1), 27–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02549948.1970.11744983>
- Huang, P. (2014). Jongmyo Jeryeak and Its Preservation Today. *Min Su Qu Yi: Journal of Chinese Ritual, Theatre, and Folklore*, 185, 11–49.
- Hwang, K.-S. (2002). Muyong: Juyeogeuoro bon jongmyoilmuui segyegwan [The World View in Jongmyo Ilum from the Perspective of the Book of Changes]. *The Korean Journal of Physical Education*, 41(4), 371–377.
- Hwang, K.-S., & Baek, S.-G. (2003). Jaejeudaenseuui gachiwa daejunghwa bangan [The Values of Jazz Dance and Its Popularization Measures]. *Journal of*

- Korean Philosophic Society for Sport and Dance*, 11(1), 269–280.
- “III. CONFUCIANISM IN VIETNAM.” Last modified July 23, 2018. <http://www.sacred-texts.com/asia/rsv/rsv06.htm>.
- Ji, D. H. (2000). Munhwa: Joseonjeongi jongmyojedo yeongu [A Study on the Jongmyo System of early Joseon Dynasty]. *Korean Thought and Culture*, 8, 234–336.
- Joh, C.-Y. (2013). Jongmyojeryeagui yeokakjeong sayu-chegyey yeongu - eumyang daedaewa cheungwi gujoreul jungsimeuro [A Study on Thinking the System of I Ching of Jongmyo-Jeryeak]. *The Study of Confucianism*, 51, 139–180.
- “Jongmyo Shrine.” Last modified July 30, 2018. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/738>
- “Jongmyojerye.” Last modified July 26, 2018. https://web.archive.org/web/20071020221522/http://www.jongmyo.net/sub/company/eng_com_origin.asp
- “Jongmyojerye: Instruments.” Last modified July 26, 2018. https://web.archive.org/web/20071023052016/http://www.jongmyo.net/sub/music/eng_mu_musical_ins.asp.
- “Jongmyojerye: Instruments.” Last modified July 26, 2018. https://web.archive.org/web/20071028103532/http://www.jongmyo.net/sub/music/eng_mu_musical_ins02.asp.
- “Jongmyojerye: Procedure of Jerye.” Last modified July 26, 2018. https://web.archive.org/web/20071023052625/http://www.jongmyo.net/sub/movingpicture/eng_mov_jongmyo.asp.
- “Jongmyojerye: Ritual Foods.” Last modified July 26, 2018. https://web.archive.org/web/20071023051835/http://www.jongmyo.net/sub/clothes/eng_clo_jesu.asp.
- “The Jongmyo Royal Ancestral Rite and Royal Procession, a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.” Last modified July 26, 2018. https://web.archive.org/web/20110721181654/http://www.visitseoul.net/en/article/article.do?_method=view&art_id=36643&lang=en&m=0003001006008&p=06, accessed on 26/Jul/2018.
- Juergensmeyer, M. (2005). *Religion in Global Civil Society*. Oxford University Press.
- Kang, D. (2012). Yugyo josanguiryeyui mirae [The Future of Confucian Ancestral Rites in Contemporary Korea]. *Korean Journal of Religious Studies*, 69, 1–26.
- Kang, H.-J. (2009). Jongmyojeryeagui munhwasaajeong gachi [Cultural History Value of Royal Ancestral Shrine Music]. *Journal of the Korean Music Education*, 27, 71–102.
- Kang, J.-H. (2017). Joseon chogi beulbeon josanguiryeyui yugyojeong jeongbi [A Study on the Establishment of Confucian State Rituals for Royal Ancestors During Early Joseon]. *The Journal for the Studies of Korean History*, 66, 121–166. <https://doi.org/10.21490/jskh.2017.02.66.121>
- Kang, Jae-Hoon., Jung, J.-S., Lee, H.-J., Park, J.-H., Han, H.-J., Kim, S.-B., Lee, M.-J., Song, H.-J., & Nam, H.-H. (2014). *Jongmyo: Including the Spirit of Joseon*. National Palace Museum of Korea.
- “Jeongjeon and Yeongnyeongjeon.” Last modified August 1, 2018. <http://www.dapsa.kr/blog/?p=8657>
- Keum, J.-T. (2009). *Evil Spirit and Ancestral Rite: The Religious World of Confucianism*. J and C.
- Kim, J.-I. (2013). A Study of Metal Ritual Vessels at the Joseon Court - Focused on the Ritual Vessels at the Jongmyo Shrine. *Korean Journal of Art History (= Art and Archaeology)*, 277, 133–165.
- Kim, Y.-M., & Lim, E.-J. (2001). Joseonsidae jongmyowa sajing guseonggwannyeome gwanhan yeongu [A study on the compositional concept of Chongmyo and Sajik in Choson Dynasty]. *Journal of Korean Institute of Traditional Landscape Architecture*, 19(4), 1–13.
- Knapp, K. N. (2009). Three fundamental bonds and five constant virtues. In L. Cheng (Ed.), *Berkshire encyclopedia of China* (pp. 2252–2255). MA; Berkshire Publishing Group LLC.
- Ko, C. S. (2001). Jongmyo Shrine Music and Yeongsanjae Buddhist Ritual. *Business Korea*, 18(11), 41–62.
- Kwalliso, M. C. (2009). *Segye yusan Chongmyo = World heritage Jongnyo Shrine*.
- Kwon, Y.-L. (2012). Joseonhugi chilgunqiryewa gukga josangsin [Chilgun Ritual (a Ritual for Seven Biological Mothers of Kings) and National Ancestors in Late Joseon Dynasty]. *The Journal of Seoul Studies*, 38, 69–103.
- Lee, B.-O. (2008). *Korean Folk Dance*. Korea Foundation.
- Lee, H.-J. (2004). The Management of the Yeongnyeong-jeon Shrine, and discussions regarding its renovation during the latter half of the choson dynasty period. *Han'guk Munhwa: Korean Culture*, 33, 177–212.
- Lee, H.-J. (2005). Joseon sukjongcho jeonggung donghyanggwa baehyang gongsin [The social and political situation of the beginning of Joseon King Sukjong and Baeyang Gongsin]. *Hankuk Hakpo Journal of Korean Studies*, 31(2), 121–173.
- Lee, H.-J. (2008). *A study on Jongmyo Rite of Late Joseon Dynasty*. Iljisa.
- Lee, H.-J. (2009). 19segi joseon wangsirui wangwi gye-seunggwa jongmyo sesillon [The Royal Succession of the Joseon Dynasty and the Controversy Over the Establishment of Saeshil in the Royal Shrine During the 19th Century]. *The Study of Korean History of Thought*, 32, 365–401. chinaconnectu.com/wp-content/pdf/ThreeFundamentalBondsandFiveConstantVirtues.pdf
- Lee, H.-J. (2012). Daehanjegugui seonpowa jongmyo jedoui byeonhwa - chilbangui guseonggwa hwangje chujon, sinjureul jungsimeuro [The foundation of the daehan empire and the changes the national Shrine Went Through]. *The Study of Korean History of Thought*, 40, 499–538.
- Lee, S.-H. (2016). Goguryeo wangsirui segye insing chuiwa jongmyoyui byeoncheon [The progress of royal genealogy and Jongmyo Shrine in Goguryeo Dynasty]. *Journal of Humanities*, 22, 154–183.
- Lee, W. 2014. “Rediscovering Aesthetics of Jongmyo Shrine.” *The Korea Times*, March 18. <https://search-proquest-com.virtual.anu.edu.au/docview/1989473680?pq-origsite=summon>.
- Lee, W. (2015). *The Ritual Space of the Joseon dynasty: Acculturation of refinement and sacrifice*. Hangukhak Chungang Yonuwon Chulpanbu.
- Lee, W. (2017). *The death of kings and its funeral in the Joseon Era: Grief, veneration, and the formalization of memory*. Minsokwon.
- Legge, J. (1872). The Ch'un Ts'ëw with The Tso Chuen. In J. Legge (Ed.), *The Chinese Classics V* (pp. 136–147). Crawford, & Co.
- Li, M. (2020). Looking back to Quiddity Between Traditional Chinese Architecture and Ancestor Worship. *Journal of Chinese Architecture and Urbanism*, 2(1), 1–14. <http://dx.doi.org/10.36922/jcau.v2i1.908>
- Moon, S. (2016). Jongmyojeryeang wonhyeonggwa hyeonhaengui bigyo gochal [A Study on Comparing the Original and Current Jongmyo Jeryeak]. *The Research of the Performance Art and Culture*, 32, 31–69.

- National Palace Museum of Korea. (2012). *The illustrated dictionary of the Joseon royal culture: Costume*.
- National Palace Museum of Korea. (2014). *The illustrated dictionary of the Joseon Royal Culture: Court Music and Dances*.
- National Palace Museum of Korea. (2016). *The illustrated dictionary of the Joseon Royal Culture: National Sacrificial Rites*.
- Nelson, E. S. (2011). The Yijing and Philosophy: From Leibniz to Derrida. *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 38(3), 377–396. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6253.2011.01661.x>
- Palmer, S. J. (1984). *Confucian Rituals in Korea*. Asian Humanities Press.
- Park, B., & Jeongae, O. 2011. "Wooden Materials of Jeongjeon and Yeongnyeongjeon." *Conference Proceedings of the Korean Society of Wood Science & Technology*: Seoul: Korean Society of Wood Science and Technology, 148–149.
- Park, E. S., & Kim, J. E. (2015). Tekseuteu maining bun-seogeul hwaryonghan jongmyoui yutmmuhyeong kontencheu yeonghyangyoin yeongu [A Study on the Tangibility and Intangibility Value Contents Influence Factor of Jongmyo Shrine Using Text Mining Analysis]. *Korea Science & Art Forum*, 22, 169. <https://doi.org/10.17548/ksaf.2015.12.22.169>
- Park, G. (1996). Jongmyo: The Living Witness of the Five Hundred Years Old Capital. *Urban Affairs*, 31, 130–140.
- Park, J. C. (2001). Joseonsidae jeollyenonjaenge daehan jaepyeongga - ipseungdaetongui jeollyemunjereul jungsimeuro [A Re-evaluation of the Royal Ritual Controversies in Chosun Dynasty]. *Korean Thought and Culture*, 11, 104–105.
- Park, M. R. (2015). Jongmyoeseo sijosinui wisanggwa singyeong - hyeop, chejesaui seollimmunjereul jungsimeuro- [The Status and Divinity of Progenitor God at the Ceremonies of Ancestral Temple]. *Korean Thought and Culture*, 77, 377–402.
- Runes, D. D. (ed). (1983). *Dictionary of Philosophy*. Philosophical Library.
- Seo, J.-H. (2016a). Jindae ijeon jongmyoui gineunggwa yeokare daehan sogo -gomunjaeseoui san- ghyeonggwa judaeui gungmyoyujeokji josa min munheonjeong saryereul jungsimeuro [A Study on the Functions and Roles of the Jongmyo Shrine before Qin Dynasty—Focusing on Hieroglyphics of Ancient Letters, Researchers of the Ruins of Goong-Myo During Zhou Period and Documentary Cases]. *Studies in Philosophy East-West*, 79, 65–94. DOI: 10.15841/kspew.79.201603.65
- Seo, J.-H. (2016b). Jigyaen juitgchui gineunggwa geu uimie daehan japchyeongcheotjuui ihae [Understanding of Confucian Scriptures on the Function and Meanings of A Jongmyo Shrine in Zhou Dynasty Era]. *Studies in Philosophy East-West*, 82, 45–73. DOI: 10.15841/kspew.82.201612.45
- Shin, S.-K. (2014). Juitgn jggeojui tansaeng: Tjuitgchui gonggangwa baechireul jungsimeuro [The Birth of Royal Ancestral Shrine System in Ancient China— Focused on its space and configuration]. *Journal of East Asian Cultures*, 57(57), 41–67. <https://doi.org/10.16959/jeachy.57.201405.41>
- Song, H.-J. (2001). Jongmyo Jeryeak [Jongmyo Jerye-Ak]. *Koreana*, 15(3), 42–45.
- Song, H.-J. (2008). *Confucian Ritual Music of Korea*. Seoul: Korea Foundation.
- The 20th Book of the Taejong Fairy King's Book (太宗恭定大王實錄, or the Veritable Records of King Taejong), part of the *Joseon Dynasty Annals* (朝鮮王朝實錄).
- Tu, W. (1990). Confucian Tradition in Chinese History. In P. S. Ropp & T. H. Barrett (Eds.), *The Heritage of China: Contemporary Perspectives on Chinese Civilization* (pp. 113–125). University of California Press.
- Yao, X. (2000). *An Introduction to Confucianism*. Cambridge University Press.
- Yi, S.-M. "Introduction to the Uigwe Roral Documents of the Joseon Dynasty." Last modified August 10, 2018. <https://eall.columbian.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs1721/f/downloads/Yi%20Song-mi%20Paper.pdf>.
- Yingshi, Y. (1996). *Xiandai Ruxue Lun*. Global Publishing Co. Inc.
- Zhihai, Z., & Zhijing, Q. (1993). *The Forbidden City of Beijing*. China Today Press.



© 2021 The Author(s). This open access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) 4.0 license.

You are free to:

Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format.

Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially.

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:

Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made.

You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

No additional restrictions

You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.



***Cogent Social Sciences* (ISSN: 2331-1886) is published by Cogent OA, part of Taylor & Francis Group.**

Publishing with Cogent OA ensures:

- Immediate, universal access to your article on publication
- High visibility and discoverability via the Cogent OA website as well as Taylor & Francis Online
- Download and citation statistics for your article
- Rapid online publication
- Input from, and dialog with, expert editors and editorial boards
- Retention of full copyright of your article
- Guaranteed legacy preservation of your article
- Discounts and waivers for authors in developing regions

Submit your manuscript to a Cogent OA journal at www.CogentOA.com

