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# Cheonggyecheon: Nice Place to Visit

Moe Moe Oo\*

## Abstract

So many great places to live in Seoul. Let me inform the nice place to visit in Cheonggyecheon. This is the historical site of Chohung Bank, established in 1897 as the first bank in Korea. It later became Chohung Bank and led the financial modernization of Korea. Cheonggyecheon restoration is essential to revive the environment and to make Seoul the key point of Northeast Asia. Cheonggyecheon has turned a dark city into a green city. It has not only divided the capital geographically but also has played a symbolic role as the boundary in politics, society and culture. Chohung Bank donated king Jeong job's procession to the royal Tomb' to give citizens a glimpse into Korean proud history. We can analyze the Korea culture and identity.

Key words: Royal forces, Korean culture

## Introduction

The original name of Cheonggyecheon is 'Gaecheon' meaning "Open Stream" and its sources are Mt.Inwang located in northwest Seoul, the south foot of Mt.Bugak and the north foot of Mt.Nam. It is an urban stream flowing from west to east converging at the center of Seoul.<sup>1</sup> Its total length spans 10.92 km.<sup>2</sup> Cheonggyecheon area<sup>3</sup> would create traffic problems, air pollution and noise pollution during the work.<sup>4</sup> With the water flowing in the stream, the temperature decreases about 0.9 to 2.2 degrees and protects

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<sup>1</sup> See Fig-1 Wood Block Map; *National Treasure*, No.853. w.66.7cm. Korea University Museum (Henceforth *National Treasure*)

<sup>2</sup> 11miles

<sup>3</sup> See Fig-2, Cheonggyecheon Stream

<sup>4</sup> See Fig-4 Bridge Design, Fig-5 Landscape Design, Fig-6 Lighting Design, Shin, J.H and Lee, I.K; *Cheon Gye Cheon Restoration in Seoul*, Korea, proceedings of Institute of Civil Engineers-Civil Engineering, Nov, 2006, Vol.159, No.4, 162-170.

sewage system.<sup>5</sup> Now in 2005, Cheonggyecheon has turned a dark city into a green city.<sup>6</sup> Restoration is essential environmentally, economically and culturally.”<sup>7</sup> The effort to restore the ecology of Cheonggyecheon is based on the concept of the three access history, culture and nature.<sup>8</sup> Out of them I would like to show the study focus of the mosaic painting in Cheonggyecheon.

Ever since Seoul was designated as the capital during the Joseon Dynasty in 1394, our 600-year-old capital city, in the past, Cheonggyecheon was apart of everyone's life spaces of people and a place of creating history and culture of Seoul.

Suseon jeondo is a woodblock map of the streets of Seoul produced by Kim Jeong-ho in 1825, during the late Joseon period.<sup>9</sup> The area from Mt. Dobongsan in the north of Seoul to the Hangang River in the South of Seoul is bisected from east to west by Jongno Street. Some 460 important place names including major roads, bridges, and fortresses in Seoul are shown Suseon jeondo is considered the most outstanding woodblock map of Seoul produced during the Joseon period in terms of accuracy and size.<sup>10</sup>

In the Joseon Dynasty, Cheonggyecheon was a laundry place, a playground and even a center of commerce.<sup>11</sup> One can find the mosaic painting of king Jeong job's procession.<sup>12</sup> In the second lunar month of 1795, king Jeongjo, the 22<sup>th</sup> on monarch of the Joseon Dynasty, accompanied by his mother, Queen Hyegyeong Hong, visited the tomb

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<sup>5</sup> See Fig-3 Sewage System; Shin, J.H, Lee, Y.H, Kewon, W.T and Kim, Y. J; *A Large Scale Demotirlon in a Densely Populated Urban area*, Bridge Management, Thomas Telford, London, the UK, 2005, 195-202.

<sup>6</sup> Lee Hyung-joo, Lee Hyun-jeong, *City of Seoul*, The Granite Tower, Korea University Journal, November, 2005, 24-27 (Lee Hyung-joo, Lee Hyun-jeong, 2005), See Fig-7 Restoration of Ecology

<sup>7</sup> Byun Woo-hyuk (Professor), *Byun Woo-hyuk's Opinion on Cheonggyecheon*, The Granite Tower Journal, Korea University, November, 2005, 27

<sup>8</sup> See Fig-8 Historical Restoration, Lee, T.S, *Buried Treasure*; Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project, Civil Engineering, the Magazine of the American Society of Civil Engineers, 2004, Vol.74, No.1, 31-41

<sup>9</sup> *National Treasure*

<sup>10</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 11

<sup>11</sup> Lee Hyung-joo, Lee Hyun-jeong, 2005, 24

<sup>12</sup> See Fig-15, Mosaic Painting

of his father, Prince Sado, at Hwaseong (today's Suwon) to commemorate his father's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.<sup>13</sup>

Upon returning to Seoul, the king ordered the compilation of Wonhaeng Eulmyo Jeongni Eugwae, a volume of sketches commemorating King Jeongjo's royal progress to Suwon. Cheonggyecheon is an important historical cultural site that witnessed the difficult lives of the common people during the Joseon period.<sup>14</sup>

### **Mosaic Painting**

The cultural and historical heritage of the city center will be preserved. Seoul city will make the city center a pleasant place to citizens to shop as well as to learn about the enjoy culture. The Cheonggyecheon mosaic painting will be a joyful place for citizens to visit and attraction with a friendly atmosphere.

Seen at the front are soldiers, followed by eunuchs, officials responsible for keys, medical stall, and other officials including Yi Jo-won, a civil minister. Behind them are 50 soldiers and special unit soldiers with standards, followed by Sim Hwan-ji, Minister of Defense,<sup>15</sup> and civil and military government officials.<sup>16</sup> At the end of the procession are 25 soldiers guarding the palanquins, some with bows and other with guns.<sup>17</sup>

Ninety-six of the royal guards to King Jeongjo stationed in Seoul and Hwaseong were selected to march in this procession. Following the guards are soldiers, two policemen,<sup>18</sup> military units with colorful standards, and a band. At the rear of the procession is Seo Yu-dae, a military commander, heading a party of military officers and regular soldiers.<sup>19</sup>

At the front are Yun Haeng-im and Yi Si-su, two government officials, escorting the palanquins of Princess Cheongyeon and Princess Cheongseon,<sup>20</sup> King Jeonjo's sisters. Queen Hyoeu Kim, wife of king Jeongjo, did not participate in this procession. Behind the palanquins are a

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<sup>13</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 12, Map-I

<sup>14</sup> [WWW.geocities.com/asiaglobe/gallery](http://WWW.geocities.com/asiaglobe/gallery), p.9

<sup>15</sup> See Fig-23, Minister

<sup>16</sup> See Fig-24, Officer

<sup>17</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 2

<sup>18</sup> See Fig-29, Policemen

<sup>19</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 3

<sup>20</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 4

number of government officials in the civil and military services, technical specialists responsible for medicine, and lanterns<sup>21</sup> and candles<sup>22</sup> as well as those who will make the official records of the procession.<sup>23</sup>

This is the highlight of the royal procession. Here is the palanquin carrying Queen Hyegyeong followed by king Jeongjo on horseback.<sup>24</sup> The royal palanquin is pulled by two horses, one at the front and the other at the rear. An imposing array of court soldiers with whips is leading the palanquin, and gunmen<sup>25</sup> and other military personnel guarding the palanquin and the king. To the front and rear of the king's horse are unarmed officials, followed by horses carrying goods for the king.<sup>26</sup>

Here is Minister Seo Yong-bo, followed by court ladies with veils and court attendants on horseback. Behind them are spokesmen for the king and trainers with bows<sup>27</sup> on their backs. Extra horses for carrying the palanquin of Queen Hyegyeong and horses carrying royal armor for the king follow under heavy guard. The sight of armor and seals wrapped with tiger leather is impressive.<sup>28</sup> The court ladies<sup>29</sup> are here to prepare and serve meals for queen Hyegyeong and the king.<sup>30</sup>

Following the royal standard bearers is a mounted band of 51 musicians playing 10 different kinds of instruments, including daegak, trumpets, jeomja, jabara, haegeum, jeok, gwan, janggo, nagak, and jeong. The painting vibrates with such energy that we can almost feel the bearer of the percussion, wind<sup>31</sup> and string players.<sup>32</sup> Behind the band are veiled court ladies and soldiers carrying colorful standards. Next is a carrying food to be served during breaks in the procession.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> See Fig-30 Lantern

<sup>22</sup> See Fig-31 Candle

<sup>23</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 4

<sup>24</sup> See Fig-16 King Jeongjo's Palanquin

<sup>25</sup> See Fig-27 Gunner

<sup>26</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 5, See Fig-19 Horses carrying goods for the king

<sup>27</sup> See Fig-25 Bow Trainer (Archer)

<sup>28</sup> See Fig-18 Horse Carrying Armor for the King

<sup>29</sup> See Fig-36 Court Lady

<sup>30</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 6

<sup>31</sup> See Fig-33 Wind Player

<sup>32</sup> See Fig-34 String Players

<sup>33</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 7, See Fig-20 Carrying Food to be Served

Here we can see the royal palanquin for king Jeongjo, but the king is riding a horse<sup>34</sup> behind the palanquin carrying Queen Hyegyeong, his mother. To the front is a horse carrying royal seals,<sup>35</sup> a royal spokesman, a royal bodyguard with a sword,<sup>36</sup> and veiled court ladies followed by 50 military officials headed by Minister Sim I-ji. Next are officials bearing royal ceremonial flags decorated with various animal designs including a lion, a phoenix, and a red bird, and behind them are large flags of the phoenix and dragon, symbols of the king.<sup>37</sup>

Soldiers bearing flags of the blue dragon, white tiger, god of the sun, and god of the moon are at the front, followed by a band playing trumpets, bara, hojeok, drums, jeong, solbal, and haegeum. Immediately behind is Yi Gyeong-mu, the chief of the military training camp, along with horse carrying the royal seal, armor, and soldiers with swords followed by 25 court guards.<sup>38</sup>

As the destination of the procession is Hwaseong in Gyeonggi-do Province, the governor of Gyeonggi-do is at the head of the entourage. Minister Chae Je-gong holds temporary authority of prime minister for this event and is seen riding a horse, escorted by military officers and royal guards. Following them are 84 Special Forces, cavalry, and infantry soldiers marching to the beat of drums.<sup>39</sup> To the right and left of the procession are soldiers with clubs<sup>40</sup> and flag bearers escorting high-ranking officials.<sup>41</sup> In it was his majesty the king Jenongjo by Guards. Next follow the royal families, officers and staffs.

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<sup>34</sup> See Fig-26 Cavalry Soldier

<sup>35</sup> See Fig-17 Horse Carrying Royal Seal

<sup>36</sup> See Fig-28 Royal Sword

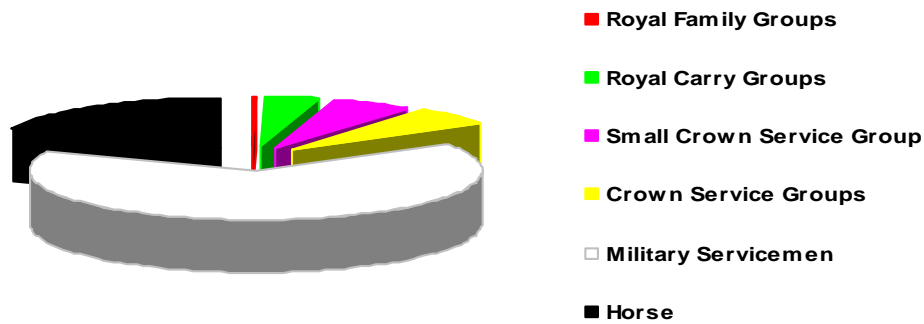
<sup>37</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 8, See Fig-22 Soldiers Bearing Flags

<sup>38</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 9

<sup>39</sup> See Fig-32 Percussion Player, Fig-35 Cymbal

<sup>40</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 9

<sup>41</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 10



**Fig-1 King Jeonjo's Royal Procession**

Source: King Jeongjo's Royal Procession Stone Plaque. Nos. 1-12, Cheonggyecheon Stream, Seoul, South Korea, Dr. Moe Moe Oo Collection

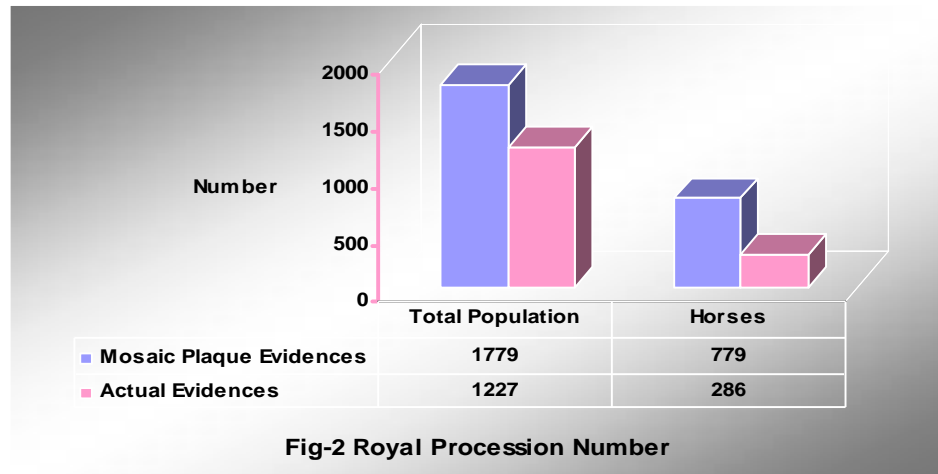
We can approximate the Chief Queen, Lesser Queens, Royal relatives, Minister, Lords, Court Ladies, Nobles, Commanders and Generals in Cavalry etc, were assigned to them according to their rank and position. The battalions included foot soldiers, cavalries, charioteers, equestrian lancers, swords men, gunners, artillery men, officials, medical staff and civil ministers, soldiers guarding the palanquin, royal guards, policemen,<sup>42</sup> bow trainers, royal armor and string players.

This book includes paintings showing the royal procession departing from Changdeokgung Palace and crossing Gwangtonggyo Bridge to Hwaseong with an entourage of 1,779 people and 779 horses.<sup>43</sup> The most talented court painters, including Kim Hong-do, were commissioned to

<sup>42</sup> Fig-29 Policemen

<sup>43</sup> See Fig-9 Confucius Temple, Fig-10 Crossing Han River, Fig-11 Arrive to Temple, Fig-12 Fire Work, Fig-13, Military Training, Fig-14 Temporary Palace

produce this piece.<sup>44</sup> In other words, it was the main force of the city.<sup>45</sup>



Source: Royal Procession, Stone Plaque. Nos.2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

When compared to the list given by the above mentioned royal procession and actual amounts are different to one another. We do not know accurately amount. However it can be guessed that mosaic painting might have some source materials to which we are not accessible. At the same time historical and cultural resources will be recovered restored and fully utilized as tourism resources. It will restore the dignity and prestige of the center of Seoul a city boasting a long history and rich culture.

## Site

We can analyze the mosaic paintings, Palace, Province, Street and Bridge are all in the same procession records are as follows:<sup>46</sup>

Changdeokgung Palace  
 Gwangtonggyo Bridge  
 Gyeonggin do Province  
 Hangang River (South of Seoul)  
 Hwaseong (today's Suwon)  
 Jongno Street (Seoul is bisected from East to West)

<sup>44</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 12

<sup>45</sup> *King Jeongjo's Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. No. 12, Cheonggyecheon Stream, Seoul, South, Korea, Dr. Moe Moe Oo Collection (Henceforth *Royal Procession*)

<sup>46</sup> *National Treasure*



Mt.Dobongsan (North of Seoul)  
 Samilgyo  
 Seokchuk  
 Seoul  
 Songgygyo (the present Sejongro)  
 Suseon Jeondo (Street)  
 Yeongdogyo  
 Yeonggigyo(the present Cheonggye-8ga)

By studying the provinces, we can see around the Seoul area.

### **Korea Procession**

On such occasions the king appeared in the royal insignia, which otherwise only figure as emblems of state. The ensign betokening the present of the king and royal families are the palanquin. The court in king Jeongjo consisted of the king's mother, sisters, officials and services together with their positions and paraphernalia of power. Royal Families are as follow:

King Jeongjo  
 Princess Cheongseon (King Jeongjo's sister)  
 Princess Cheongyeon (King Jeongjo's sister)  
 Queen Hyegyeonggung Hong (King Jeongjo's mother)

One can find the royal families ties. It not only represented visible signs of power and authority but also constituted the elite who controlled the administration.

Among the officers of the procession Governor, Prime Minister, Minister, Commander, Engineer, Technician, Compiler and Court Painter were the senior gazette officers. The following is the list of the officers of the procession:

Gyeonggi-do	(The Governor)
Chae Je-gong	(Minister),(Temporary Prime Minister)
Sim I-ji	(Head by Minister)
Seo Yong-bo	(Minister)
Sim Hwan-ji	(Minister of Deference)
Yi Jo-won	(Civil Minister)
Yi Si-su	(Government Official)
Yun Haeng-in	(Government Official)
Seo Yu-dae	(Military Commander)
Yi Gyeong-mu	(The Chief of Military)

Kim Jeong-ho  
 Technical Specialists Service  
 Wonhaeng Eulmyo Jeongni Eugwae  
 Kim Hong-do

Traning Camp)  
 (Engineer), Producer  
 -  
 (Compiler)  
 (Court Painters)

Officials at the top of the social echelon were mostly conferred upon titles and insignias by king due to their prowess or valor or personal service per excellence to kings. The ranks show the status and power of the holder and how much extent they were in close proximity to the ruling monarch. So let me mention the very impressive status to officials of the royal procession. The services and duties lay in procession were as follows:

A Royal Bodyguard	Horse Carrying Royal Seals
A Royal Spokesman	Infantry
A Royal Sword	Lanterns
Candles	Medical Stall
Carrying Food to be Served	Musicians
Cavalry Soldiers	Percussion Players
Court Guards	Policemen
Court Ladies	Soldiers
Eunuchs	Soldiers Bearing Flags
Guarding the Bows	Soldiers with Club
Guarding the Gunmen	String Players
Guarding the Palanquins	Wind Players
Horse Carrying Royal Armor for the King	

These titles manifest the variations in ranks of the services. We can approximate the ranks, social status, supra and infra relation, power or authority and the important role the holders played.

### **Privileges**

In the feudal politics awarding privileges and decoration to the officials who were outstanding with their ability and valor was one of the most important tasks to be duly done by the ruling monarch for his peaceful longevity and for the welfare of state and people. Korean kings who emulated in the awarding titles and decorations to his outstanding officials without hesitation. The royal regalia and insignia together with how they were properly used were also mentioned and detail in this work. The king

had to take the responsibility of national defense and the government duty at the same time. The king also granted privileges, rights and insignia on the basis of ranks. Those decorations and honorariums were those titles and uniforms were granted to be adorned, things to be held, to be ridden on, to be traveled with, and position assigned to be seated at when having royal audience. One can differentiate the crown service personnel, by seeing the dresses they wore on, whether they were high-ranking officials or not and to which department or social status group they belonged.

High-ranking officers were granted ornaments of horse military badges, horse harness<sup>47</sup> and silver mounted swords, umbrellas, mace, musical instruments-like drums, cymbals, together with other insignia etc. in accord with their ranks. The role of Provincial officer status were discussed how the king rewarded insignia to cavalry corps and services and how they took part in privileges and practice of rewards were analytical in detail.<sup>48</sup>

### Result and Discussion

The occasion show and tourney were military parade and royal ceremonial to display the prowess of their land forces. The following are the objectives of holding the royal procession:

- Reviving and further pursuing Korean traditional military parade.
- Directing all efforts, as a national duty, at maturing union spirit, and preserving national cultural heritage.
- Energizing Seoul and highlights its beauty in Cheonggyecheon area.
- Focusing on restoration of ecology.

### Conclusion

The Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project will be an important step toward balanced development between the northern and southern parts of the city. Seoul will attract more tourists by linking such traditional culture events in the neighborhood of Cheonggyecheon to historic sites in the center of the city.<sup>49</sup> The mosaic mural painting keeps a detailed record of

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<sup>47</sup> See Fig-21 Horse Harness

<sup>48</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. Nos.2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14

<sup>49</sup> Dr.Mi Kyeun-Kim, Assistant Professor, Political Science, Asiatic Research Center, Korea University, Seoul, South Korea

King Jeong jo's procession. The king took with him not only his royal family, relatives and the whole court but also his armed forces. This mosaic painting includes showing the royal procession departing from Changdeokgung Palace and crossing Gwangtanggyo Bridge to Hwaseong with an entourage of 1,779 people and 779 horses.<sup>50</sup> Cavalry forces were used only for the royalty on ceremonial and state occasions. Cavalry not only plays a major role in the daily life but also holds the pride of place in Korean culture.

In a word, it fully expresses the dignity and authority of the royal court and the free spirited and joyful mood of the people. This piece is of great historical values as it is both a genre painting and a documentary painting on the royal court. It provides insight into the form laities, customs, and composition of a royal procession of the times.

It will explain the restoration process and will serve as a place for academic research on the historical, cultural, urban architectural, environmental, social and economic impact. Seoul will be reborn as "A City of Culture and Environment in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."

### **Acknowledgement**

I express my gratitude to the Korea Foundation for Advanced Studies for support and friendship. I would like to thank to Dr Maung Thynn, (Rector of Meiktila University) who encouraged me to write research papers. I also special thanks to Dr Kaung Nyunt (Visiting Professor, Department of Engineering, Korea University, Seoul who give me rare photos and designs, Dr Mee Kyun-Kim (Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Asiatic Research Center, Korea University) discuss me to various ways and Dr Aye Aye Myint (Lecturer, Department of Bio Technology, Korea University, Seoul) help me to field trips for my research.

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<sup>50</sup> *Royal Procession*, Stone Plaque. Nos.2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14

**Map-I Suwon**



## Photos



Fig-1 Wood Block Map



Fig-2 Cheonggyecheon Stream



Fig-3 Sewage System



Fig-4 Bridge Design



Fig-5 Landscape Design



Fig-6 Lighting Design



Fig-7 Restoration of Ecology



Fig-8 Historical Restoration





Fig-9 Confucius Temple



Fig-10 Crossing Han River



Fig-11 Arrive to Temple



Fig-12 Fire Work



Fig-13 Military Training



Fig-14 temporary Palace



Fig-15 Mosaic Painting



Fig-16 King Jenjeo's Palanquin



Fig-17 Horse Carrying Seal



Fig-18 Horse Carrying Armor for the King



Fig-19 Horse Carrying Goods for the King

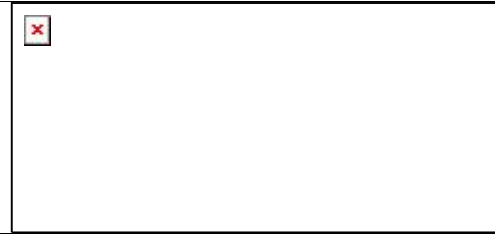


Fig-20 Carrying Food to be Served



Fig-21 Horse Harness

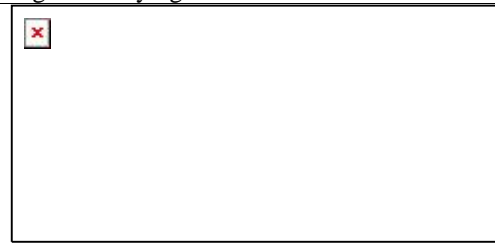


Fig-22 Soldiers Bearing Flags



Fig-23 Minister



Fig-24 Officer



Fig-25 Bow Trainer (Archer)



Fig-26 Cavalry Soldier





Fig-27 Gunner



Fig-28 Royal Sword



Fig-29 Policemen



Fig-30 Lantern



Fig-31 Candle



Fig-32 Percussion Player



Fig-33 Win Player



Fig-34 String Players



Fig-35 Cymbal



Fig-36 Court Lady

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Wood Block Map, National Treasure No.853. w.66.7cm, Korean University Museum Collection

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Banquet for the Aged held by King Jungjo in temporary Palace of Han Province, *Parabaik MS*, National Museum Collection, Seoul, South Korea

Crossing Han River (Using a Bridge made by Connection of Boats) when King Jungjo moved back to Seoul, *Parabaik MS*, National Museum Collection, Seoul

Fire Work by King King Jungjo, *Parabaik MS*, National Museum Collection, Seoul, South Korea

King Jungjo Arrive to Temple, *Parabaik MS*, National Museum Collection, Seoul

King Jungjo doing a Worship in Confucius sanctuary located in Hwaseong Confucius Temple, *Parabaik MS*, National Museum Collection, Seoul, South Korea

Military Training King Jungjo Observation, *Parabaik MS*, National Museum Collection, Seoul, South Korea

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### Interview

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