Fertility and Childbirth among Royal Women in Nineteenth-Century Korea

Kim Jiyoung, *Seoul National University*

Abstract

This study offers a look into the daily life of royal women in nineteenth-century Korea through an examination of fertility and childbirth. From the beginning of the Joseon Dynasty, the royal family identified fertility with the state's prosperity. In spite of the emphasis placed on fertility, there was a crisis of declining royal childbirth from the seventeenth century on. As Joseon kings were official figures, royal childbirth was an event of public importance. Though the primary responsibility for childbirth was on the royal women, the process of childbirth therefore became part of the institutional system. Unlike wedding ceremonies and rites of death, the rites of childbirth in Joseon Korea remained unchanged by the Confucian system. Because human beings cannot control all the risks in the process of delivery, divine assistance was invoked for safe delivery, bringing Daoist elements into the rites of childbirth. Nonetheless, Confucian discrimination between a wife and a concubine, an eldest son and the other sons and daughters were projected into the birthing process.

Key Words: fertility, childbirth, nineteenth century, Korea, royal women, royal family, daily life

Introduction

Childbirth is a universal event. In most societies, giving birth and childcare belong to the realm of women's responsibilities. Brigitte Jordan, medical anthropologist and pioneer in the field of the Anthropology of Birth, states that if we consider the ethnographic record, no known society treats birth merely as a physiological function. Around the world, childbirth is socially marked and shaped.[1] However, in Joseon Korea (1392–1910), the theme of childbirth has been ignored in the ethnographic record. This can be attributed in part to Confucianism's focus on patriarchy and the simple fact that the primary actor in childbirth is female.

The adoption of Confucianism during the Joseon period greatly transformed the role of women in Korean society.[2] By the late seventeenth century, the patriarchal family system including its clan rules had begun to take root in people's daily lives. As a result, women's lives were dominated by men: in childhood a woman followed her father, once married, she followed her husband, and later in life, she followed her son. Over the course of a woman's life, her social identity shifted from being defined as someone's daughter to someone's wife and finally as someone's mother. By the late Joseon, since only the eldest son could carry on the family name, women felt the heavy burden of the need to give birth to a son. Women who gave birth to many sons could establish their identities more firmly than women who failed to do so. In sum, a woman's identity was primarily determined by her ability to give birth to a son.

Women during the Joseon period could not avoid the burden of childbirth and childcare. As Confucian ideology spread over the whole of Joseon society, distinctions between males and females were becoming increasingly rigid

while the sphere of women's activities was narrowing to focus on the family.[3] In the epitaphs of ruling aristocrats of the time, males were described as having official careers in the public sphere, while their wives as females were defined by their duties in the private sphere, namely childbirth, childcare, and domestic management. Even though this new social climate highlighted the importance of childbirth, it became an event that occurred in invisible, private, and silent spaces.

Whereas Western society includes childbirth in the rites of passage, Joseon society excluded it from such rites. People's daily lives in Korea were organized around Confucian family rites as established by the Chinese Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi (1130–1200). These rites included the coming-of-age ceremony, marriage, death, and ancestor worship. With lives centered around the activities of men, childbirth was noticeably absent from official rites.

Confucianism's promotion of patriarchy and continuance of the family line led to an increased interest at the time in the fertility of women. Despite the importance of women's fertility and childbirth for Joseon society, and royal society in particular, the study of childbirth has received little attention from Korean scholars. Some data has been collected in the name of *sansok* (folk knowledge of childbirth).[4] However, the materials that the folklorists have gathered, have focused primarily on traditional practices of delivery in modern rural areas. Since the arrival of Western medicine in the late-nineteenth century, these birthing traditions have undergone tremendous change.

Since 2000, female anthropologists in Korea have begun to pay attention to childbirth among the middle class in modern cities.[5] The studies focusing on childbirth among royal women in the palace have dealt primarily with court customs and court medicine.[6] As a result of this research, we can now visualize the scenery of the delivery room in detail. However, it is important not only to describe the setting but to understand the meanings of fertility and delivery in the context of Korea's gender history. So the examination of fertility and childbirth in Joseon society can give us a chance to understand the cultural meanings of the behaviors of female agents in nineteenth-century Korea.

In order to understand the culture of childbirth among royal women in Joseon society, we must answer questions such as: Who were these women giving birth in the palace? What were their social positions? How did the fertility of royal women change during the nineteenth century? What was the process of childbirth? Where in the process did women's social positions become distinct from one another?

This paper will first explore the idea of fertility among the Yi royal family and the institution through which the idea came into reality. The differences in status among women in the palace were usually determined by their relations, whether in private or in public, with the king, and whether or not they gave birth to a royal baby. Focusing on some characteristics of their fertility in nineteenth-century Korea, I will also expand the coverage of the study into the late Joseon Dynasty. Next, this paper will examine the process of childbirth among royal women by comparing Queen MyeongSeong (1851–95), who gave birth to the last emperor, SunJong (r. 1907–10), with the royal concubine Eom-ssi (1854–1911),

whose son was Young Chin-Wang (1897–1970). This comparison will reveal in detail how the process of delivery differed according to a woman's social status.

As might be expected, there are very few documents which record childbirth in Joseon Korea, whether it occurred inside or outside the palace.[7] As a result, there are limits to understanding childbirth among royal women in the context of the everyday life of the royal family. This paper relies on general sources of court history such as the code of law known as the *National Code*, the *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*, and the *Daily Records of the Secretariat*. Other sources which are especially related to delivery have also been consulted; these documents, primarily from the nineteenth century, include the *Manual for a Queen's Childbirth*, the *Diary about Royal Concubine's Delivery*, and *Inner Palace Registries*. Among the *Inner Palace Registries*, one finds informal stories about royal women giving birth as recorded by court ladies; these record events and details that the more formal histories of the court would not cover. Additional historical sources related to the prosperity of the royal family have also been referenced as well as the *Book of Genealogical Lineage of the Joseon Royal Family*.[8] Last but not least, this paper will also examine a painting that appeared in royal wedding ceremonies in nineteenth-century Korea. Though the painting is very important for us to understand childbirth in the Joseon Dynasty, it has not received any attention from scholars until now. As will be seen, all of these materials give context to childbirth among royal women in nineteenth-century Korea.

The Royal Family's Desire for Fertility

The royal family during the Joseon period referred to having many children as *JongSa-Ji-Kyeung*. *JongSa* is a kind of grasshopper that lays about ninety-nine eggs at a time. So the phrase may be translated into "a cause for congratulations for having numerous children like a large swarm of grasshoppers." The term first appeared in the Chinese classic the *Book of Odes*. It symbolically reveals the royal family's desire for fertility.

From the beginning of the Joseon Dynasty, its founder King Taejo (r. 1392–98) hoped that the royal family would follow the model of the Zhou Dynasty in ancient China by having many offspring and prosperity, generation after generation.[9]

During the Joseon Dynasty, the phrase *JongSa-Ji-Kyeung* appeared in at least two different contexts. First, we can find it in references to the wedding ceremony of the royal family. It appears in documents called *Ok-ChaekMun*, which were a kind of formal letter of appointment to a queen.[10] In addition, we can also find the phrase in documents which were used to select and install a concubine for obtaining an heir to the throne.[11] The most important obligation of women who came into the royal palace through marriage was to give birth to royal children. Women who fulfilled this obligation could retain and oftentimes even improve their social standing.

We also find the phrase in congratulatory messages offered to royal newlyweds. The following is a congratulatory message from some ministers to newlyweds King Gojong (r. 1863–1907) and Queen MyeongSeong on March 22, 1866:

> The rite of marriage went smoothly on the perfect day and at the perfect time. Your highness came in person to the venue and accepted many other people's congratulations. The marriage in which a king gains a queen is a cause for congratulations and a source of all blessings.… We are singing the song which congratulates people ***for having*** [***numerous***] ***children like a large swarm of grasshoppers*** [emphasis added]. For the following thousands of millions of years, there will be a beautiful story about this.… We, [your] subjects, desperately hope that your highness will have the cause for congratulations for having a lot of children.[12]

Second, the term appeared when the elderly in the royal family and the king's men expressed their concerns about a king or a crown prince not having children, especially when there was no heir to the throne. In the following example, the queen's grandmother expresses her concerns about the lack of an heir apparent:

> The queen's grandmother Sunwon [1789–1857], said to the ministers, "The fate of the Kingdom only depends on the king. But even though he is in the prime of his life, we have not been able to see the happy event of having babies. Unfortunately, the queen has been sick but the medicine has not worked for her, which has deeply distressed the queen's mother and myself. All the people in the country are expecting the happy event to take place, not to mention the king's ancestral spirits. It is urgent that the king have an heir to the throne.
>
> If we, following the royal family's precedent, choose one daughter among the aristocratic class as the king's concubine, we will secure an heir to the throne. I am sorry that I am giving you this instruction in Korean instead of classical Chinese. But as this matter is very crucial to the fate of the kingdom, I have had no choice except to give such an instruction. You should make sure that we can see ***a cause for congratulations for having children like a large swarm of grasshoppers*** [emphasis added]."[13]

The birth of royal children was one of the primary concerns of elders of the royal family, including the king and queen, because it determined the perpetuity of their dynasty and the prosperity of the royal family. When a king took over the throne after his father passed away, the royal family was looking forward in earnest to having an heir for him. So if the birth of *the king's eldest son* was delayed, like in the case of King Heonjong (r. 1834–49) above, the delay was considered as a kind of crisis for the kingdom.

In the royal family, fertility meant prosperity of the state itself as well as the royal family. So *JongSa-Ji-Kyeung* was considered to be identical to "a cause for congratulations for the kingdom," which was also called *JongSa-Ji-Kyeung*. Here, *Jong*, an abbreviation for *Jongmyo*, means "the royal ancestor's shrine." *Sa* stands for *SaJik*, or "the gods of soil and grain."

The royal wedding ceremony also shows that the royal family eagerly desired fertility. The desire for fertility appeared, for example, in the process of choosing the officials in charge of the wedding ceremony. They were selected among the "entirely blessed," people who had shared years happily together with their spouses, led a healthy life without illness, had long lives, and had many "sons."[14] Joseon society became a patrilineal one due to Confucian clan rules. The essence of the patrilineal society was the success brought to a man's family through his sons. Thus, in late Joseon, people eagerly wanted to have sons, not daughters.

In the nineteenth century, a new painting appeared in the royal wedding ceremony. The painting supports the argument that fertility became a very important obligation for royal women in late Joseon. Just prior to marriage, the

bride would spend time in the detached palace, Byeolgung. This palace was a temporary place, where the bride would stay and receive an education during the period between being selected as the future queen until she entered the main palace, Jounggung, along with the king. Once selected, she could no longer visit her home outside the palace.

Within the detached palace there was a special folding screen on which was painted the *Painting of the Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi*. The painting first appeared in the 1802 royal wedding ceremony and offered well-wishes for fertility and continued to appear in the detached palace through 1882.

Year	The Wedding Ceremony (King/Queen)	Folding Screen Placed in the Detached Palace
1802	King Sunjo/Queen Sunwon, Andong Kim-ssi	G
		B
1819	King Ikjong/Queen Sinjeong, Pungyang Cho-ssi	G
		H
1837	King Heonjong/Queen Hyohyeon, Andong Kim-ssi	G
		B
1844	King Heonjong/Queen Hyojeong, Namyang Hong-ssi	G
1851	King Cheoljong/Queen Cheolin, Andong Kim-ssi	G
		B
1866	King Gojong/Queen Myeongseong, Yeoheung Min-ssi	G
		B
1882	King Sunjong/Queen Sunmyeong, Yeoheung Min-ssi	G
		H

(**Table 1.** Royal Weddings in the Nineteenth Century and Making Folding Screens)[15]

G: *Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi*

B: *Bird and Animal*

H: *Hundreds of Children*

The main subject of the painting was a general-turned-king named Guo Ziyi (697–781) from the Tang Dynasty in China, who had suppressed the revolt of An Lushan (703–57) in the year 755. As a result of his distinguished service to the imperial court, he was made a prince. Guo had many children—fifteen in total, eight sons and seven daughters—and lived a long life, reaching the age of almost eighty-five. He symbolized a person who had been blessed by heaven. So *Painting of the Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi* was called *Guo Ziyi Palja-Chilseo-Do*, which can be translated as "Painting of Guo Ziyi Who Has Eight Sons (*Palja*) and Seven Sons-in-Law (*Chilseo*)." There was also a novel, *Guobunyang-Jeon*, which described the life of Guo. Both the novel and the painting were popular among the upper class in nineteenth-century Korea.

Why did the *Painting of the Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi* suddenly appear in royal weddings in nineteenth-century Korea? According to an analysis from art history, the painting did not appear anywhere in China. It is said that the

Fig. 1. *Painting of the Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi*

painting was created during the late Joseon by combining several features from other paintings which had different themes.[16]

The first reference to the painting appears in *Eoje-si*, a poem written by King Sukjong (r. 1674–1720).[17] There are actually two poems written by the king that contain references to the painting.[18] King Sukjong bestowed both the poems and the painting on his successor who later would become King Kyeongjong (r. 1720–24):

> Giving the painting *Painting of the Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi* to my son.
>
> Traditionally, it is said that Guo Ziyi was a very blessed man
> There are sons, sons-in-laws, and grandchildren together in the painting
> It is not an accident that the painting was drawn on canvas
> Do put the picture next to you and appreciate it at all times
> Receive every happiness in the world and longevity

King Kyeongjong, who in 1696 married the daughter of Sim ho, later Queen Danui Sim-ssi (1686–1718), had suffered from diseases after his birthmother Huibin Jang-ssi (d. 1701) passed away. So King Sukjong gave the painting to his son, hoping that his son, who was weak and had no children, would be like the main character, Guo Ziyi, who lived a long life free from disease and blessed by many children.

Prior to the sudden appearance of the painting in 1802, there had been a continuous decrease in the number of royal children, especially after the reign of

King InJo (r. 1623–49).[19] The decrease in the number of royal children from the seventeenth century caused a variety of political problems related to succession to the throne in the eighteenth century. Finally, in the nineteenth century, as the power of the royal family weakened, its authority fell as well. For example, in the nineteenth century, King Heonjong (r. 1834–49) had no children to take over his throne and was forced to adopt a son from a collateral line. This son, who became King Cheoljong (r. 1849–63), had no successor either. As a result, King Gojong, the heir of King Cheoljong, also came from a collateral line. The more the royal family desired fertility, the more "eight sons and seven daughters" became the goal of the royal family. The placement of the folding screen with the painting *Painting of the Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi* in the detached palace, where the women were educated, reveals that for women the duty of delivering children became more important than ever.

Royal Women in the Nae-Myeongbu

Before examining childbirth among royal women during the nineteenth century, one must first examine how the hierarchy among royal women was solidified through a system of royal concubinage put in place to ensure numerous offspring for the royal family. The system of royal concubines started being discussed during the early Joseon Dynasty. By the reign of King Seongjong (r. 1469–94), regulations concerning concubines had an achieved statutory form.[20] A statute called for the creation of a governmental department known as *Nae-Myeongbu*. It consisted of all the women in the palace and was controlled by the queen. Within the *Nae-Myeongbu* were two groups: the *Nae-gwan* and the *Gung-gwan*. The *Nae-gwan* included royal concubines who were given a title corresponding to "one of the eight ranks of *Nae-Myeongbu*." The *Gung-gwan* was comprised of court ladies who had a chance to become the king's concubine and were conferred a title corresponding to "one of the ten ranks of *Nae-Myeongbu*."

However, the statute was not fully realized, and in practice varied depending upon the situation of the royal family. During the reign of Emperor Sunjong, a couple of senior court ladies once said that the titles listed in the statute were not really given to court ladies, except during special events such as weddings and banquets of the royal family. Court ladies were usually called just *Nain*, which means "a women in the palace," and their ordinary tasks determined their real titles.[21]

Court ladies served the members of the royal family. They were forbidden to marry and were not permitted to leave the palace. In general, they were nothing but "women of the king." Their duties included washing, cooking, cleaning, sewing, making beds, etc. Those who worked as personal maids and waited on the king in his bedroom were called *Jimil-Nain* and had the chance to receive *Seungeun*, the king's blessing. In this case, *Seungeun* means to go to bed with the king. *Jimil-Nain* were only three to four years old when they entered service as court ladies, much younger than the age of twelve when other court ladies usually entered the palace. If they had the king's blessing they had the chance, albeit rare, of being promoted to royal concubine.[22]

Office of	Age at Entrance	Age at Capping Ceremony (15 years after entrance)	Age at Promotion to Palace Matron
Secretariat	3–4	18–19	43–44
Sewing and Stitching	6–7	21–22	56–57
Embroidery and Decoration	6–7	21–22	56–57
Bath and Toilet	around 12	around 27	around 62
Food and Meals	around 12	around 27	around 62
Snacks	around 12	around 27	around 62
Laundry	around 12	around 27	around 62

(**Table 2.** Age of Court Ladies According to Department (late 19th–early 20th centuries)

There were two kinds of royal concubines: *Gantaek-Hugung* and *Seungeun-Hugung*. *Gantaek-Hugung* were selected from among the daughters of aristocratic families. King Taejong (r. 1400–18) made a statement that there should be three *Gantaek-Hugung*. This differed from China, where a king could choose nine women.[23] *Gantaek-Hugung* started climbing up a ladder of titles from a higher level than *Seungeun-Hugung*, who are discussed below. Nevertheless, as the social distinction between wife and concubine was very strict in the late Joseon Dynasty, aristocratic families were reluctant to give their daughters away to the king to be a concubine as opposed to his queen.[24]

Before King Seonjo (r. 1568–1608), there were some cases of a concubine giving birth to a son being elevated to the position of queen. But during later reigns, even if there was a concubine who delivered a son, the royal family preferred selecting a new queen rather than promoting a concubine. Towards the late Joseon, as clan rules became more concretized, the distinction between wife and concubine became stricter than earlier.

On the other hand, the *Seungeun-Hugung* was a court lady who was blessed with the king's grace and given the title of king's concubine. In general, *Seungeun-Hugung* were from the lower class. If she bore a king's child, she was given a title. But this title was no higher than that of a *Gantaek-Hugung*. King Gojong had no women of the rank of *Gantaek-Hugung*, only those at the level of *Seungeun-Hugung*, eight of whom gave birth to his children.[25] One of his concubines, Eom-ssi, had simply been a court lady until 1897, when she gave birth to the prince who would later become Youngchin-Wang. Just three days after his delivery, she was given the title of royal concubine.[26]

According to the *Book of Genealogical Lineage of the Joseon Royal Family*, during the entire Joseon Dynasty there were a total of 273 children in the royal family. Of these, 93 children had been delivered by queens and 180 were from royal concubines, some two thirds of the total. Of the 273 royal children, 151 were sons and 122 were daughters, namely there were more sons than daughters.[27] The statistics show that the practice of having concubines actually helped the royal family produce more offspring.

Declining Fertility among Queens

How fertile were queens in nineteenth-century Korea? How was fertility defined during this period? In order to answer these questions, I will compare Queen MyeongSeong with other Joseon-period queens, in terms of age at the time of marriage, age at the time of first delivery, the interval between deliveries, and number of the children.

In late-Joseon Korea, queens got married earlier than in previous years. In the early years of the Joseon Dynasty, the age of queens at the time of marriage was usually thirteen–fifteen years old. In the mid-seventeenth century, starting from Queen MyeongSeong, who was the wife of King Hyeonjong (r. 1659–74), the age at the time of marriage was lowered to ten–eleven years old. In the late-Joseon period, however, when the first queen happened to pass away, the king had to remarry a new queen. In this case, they called the new queen *Gye-Bi*, which means "a successor to the first queen." The age at the time of marriage for the *Gye-Bi* was relatively high at around fifteen years old.

While age at the time of royal marriage decreased toward the late Joseon, the average age of first delivery for queens remained consistent at about twenty years old throughout the period. The interval between deliveries varied from one year to three years. Queens tended to start giving birth to children at around age twenty and stopped in their early thirties. It is clear that queens did not give birth to children throughout the normal childbearing period from age fifteen to forty-nine. There are many reasons that queens stopped giving birth, but most likely this was due to the fact that it was dangerous to give birth to children later in life, and many queens suffered from postnatal diseases.

The most fertile queen of the Joseon Dynasty was Queen Soheon, wife of King Sejong (r. 1418–50), the well-known creator of the Korean alphabet, Hangul. She had eight sons and two daughters. Looking at her pregnancies, one finds an interesting fact about the fertility of the queens during the Joseon period.

Queen Soheon married King Sejong at the age of fourteen and gave birth to their first child at the age of eighteen. In the beginning, she gave birth almost every one or two years, producing a total of six children in a row. About seven years later, she started giving birth again and delivered four more children until she reached the age of forty. It would not have been possible for the queen to raise all the children without the help of wet nurses selected from the lower class from outside the palace and babysitters who were selected among the court ladies. These women lessened the queen's burden in raising her children so that she could give birth to several children in a row.

Due to the support of the royal family, there were no financial difficulties for raising children. But giving birth to children in quick succession could potentially cause health problems for the queen, so she needed some time to rest and regain her strength. In addition, the queen had to officially play a role in controlling the *Nae-Myeongbu*.

In the nineteenth century, the fertility of queens rose slightly except in the case of King Heunjong's queen. Most royal babies died early, except for those of King Sunjo. After King Injo, the fertility of the royal family dropped notably and the death rate of royal children rose sharply. As a result, the number of living children in the royal family decreased. The death rate of royal children

peaked during the nineteenth century. For example, among the offspring of King Cheoljong, namely one son and ten daughters, only one daughter, Princess Yeonghye, daughter of *Seungeun-Hugung* Sukui Beom-ssi, survived.

King	Queen	Year of Birth	Age at Marriage	Age at Delivery	Birth Order	Name of Child	Child's Birth Year
Sunjo	Sunwon	1789	14	21	1st	Munjo	1809
				22	2nd	Princess Meongon	1810
				30	3rd	Princess Bonkon	1818
				32	4th	Died shortly after birth	1820
				34	5th	Princess Dukon	1822
Munjo	Sinjeong	1808	11	20	1st	Heonjong	1827
Heonjong	Hyohyeon	1828	10	–	–	–	–
	Hyojeong	1831	14	–	–	–	–
Cheoljong	Cheolin	1837	15	22	1st	Died shortly after birth	1858
Gojong	Myeong-seong	1851	16	21	1st	Died shortly after birth	1871
				23	2th	Died shortly after birth	1873
				24	3th	Sunjong	1874
				25	4th	Died shortly after birth	1875
				28	5th	Died shortly after birth	1878
Sunjong	Sun-myeong	1872	11	–	–	–	–
	Sunjeong	1894	13	–	–	–	–

(**Table 3.** Fertility of Queens in Nineteenth-Century Korea)

In the late-nineteenth century, Queen MyeongSeong had four sons and one daughter in total. She married King Gojong at the age of sixteen, which was considered slightly late. From the age of twenty-one to twenty-eight, she gave birth every one to two years and had five children. The age at which she stopped giving birth appears to be somewhat early when compared with the cases of other queens. Why was this? In the nineteenth century, children of the royal family usually died soon after birth. Queen MyeongSeong's children were not exempt from such a harsh fate. Four of her five children died shortly after birth. Also, the political situation in the late-nineteenth century was notably unstable. The royal couple was married in 1866, when a skirmish with France occurred. This period was followed by armed conflicts with other Western countries. In

1876, after the Treaty of Ganghwa was signed with Japan, Joseon was forced to open its doors to Western cultures. During this process, King Gojong did not get along with his father Heungseon-Daewongun (1820–98). In the middle of the antagonism of her husband against his father, she received death threats from her father-in-law during a military uprising in 1882. In an 1884 coup led by a third force, the Progressive Party, many relatives, including her mother, were murdered. The queen was always exposed to some kind of danger. In this situation, though her babies had died shortly after birth and only one son had survived, she could not afford to have more babies.

In sum, from the late-seventeenth century until the eighteenth century, the fertility of Joseon Dynasty queens declined. Queens who were unable to give birth to viable children all appeared during this period. As a result, the legitimate eldest son of the queen did not succeed his father to the throne. Instead, the sons of concubines had the privilege of rising to the throne. In the case of King Jeongjo (r. 1776–1800), when his *Gantaek-Hugung* concubine Subin Pak-ssi gave birth to King Sunjo (1790–1834), the royal family referred to the event as "A Great Cause for Congratulations" in 1790.[28]

The Birthing Process among Royal Women: Sansil-cheong *vs.* Hosan-cheong

The birthing process in late-Joseon Korea began with preparations for delivery within the palace. At the time a royal woman became pregnant, the king usually ordered the establishment of one of two temporary organizations: the *Sansil-cheong* (Delivery Office for the Queen) and the *Hosan-cheong* (Delivery Office for Concubines). These organizations belonged to the medical center for the royal family during the Joseon Dynasty. The most notable difference between these organizations was the social status of the pregnant women.

In preparation for a birth, regulations were followed that dictated when the organizations should be set up, how they should be staffed, and what level of prenatal care the woman should receive. The major responsibility of the *Sansil-cheong* was to help a pregnant queen safely deliver the child. Three managerial officials, several male doctors, and two female nurses were charged with frequently checking on her health, determining what medication she should take, and preparing for emergencies. These officials were assigned to a location set up near the delivery room, where they could attend to and care for her.

Examining the case of preparations made for the delivery of Queen MyeongSeong's third child provides one with an understanding of the process of setting up the *Sansil-cheong*. The *Sansil-cheong* for MyeongSeong was organized on January 03, 1874 (by the lunar calendar), after the doctor examined her and predicted the due-month. Though regulations stipulated that the *Sansil-cheong* should be set up three months in advance of the due-month, it was generally organized only one month prior. The *Daily Records of the Secretariat* reveals what was discussed at the time: for example, the date when the pregnant Queen MyeongSeong would be examined and the date when the *Sansil-cheong* should be set up. Despite being near her delivery date, preparations for the delivery were delayed, whatever the reason might be.[29] In addition, due to a fire engulfing Gyeongbok Palace on December 10, 1873, the royal family, including the

pregnant queen, were forced to move to another palace, Changduk Palace, ten days later on the 20th of December.[30] The date noted for her medical examination was scheduled for the 28th, eight days after the move.[31]

The establishment of the *Sansil-cheong* signaled the beginning of the official preparations for the delivery. This would enact strict regulations related to childbirth to be followed not only by people inside the palace, but by those outside the palace as well. For example, executions were postponed for 100 days, and the imprisonment of criminals and slaughtering of animals were forbidden for twenty-one days from the day of setting up the *Sansil-cheong* until twenty-one to 100 days after delivery.[32] In Joseon Korea, there was a widespread belief that because everything in the world is related to one another, at least when a king's baby is about to be born, whatever could, even indirectly, have bad effects on it must not be allowed to happen.

Twenty-four staff members were assigned to the *Sansil-cheong*. If necessary, additional doctors and attendees could be added to the staff. First of all, there were three high officials, including a minister, who served as administrators. The *Sansil-cheong* had a *Gwoncho-gwan* (special high official), who was blessed with a long life free from disease and was the father of many children. It was believed that his merits would have positive effects on the delivery, bestowing the baby with good health and good fortune.

The *Gwoncho-gwan* was in charge of the *Gwoncho-je*, the ritual which was held for a newborn on the seventh day after birth. At the time of delivery, a straw mat was spread out on the bed. Immediately after childbirth, the *Gwoncho-gwan* would order his men or women to remove this mat from the delivery room and to hang it on the top of a special door near the room for a period of seven days. On the seventh day, when the ritual began, the *Gwoncho-gwan* would roll the mat up and put it into a chest or a precious box. The chest and other items related to "long life without diseases" were placed on a table for worship. The *Gwoncho-gwan* then burned incense and made a low bow twice.[33]

Until the late-sixteenth century, palace rules governing the delivery of concubines were very strict, dictating that concubines give birth outside of the palace in private homes. Only queens were allowed to give birth within the palace. However, during the reign of King Seonjo (r. 1568–1608), two concubines, Kim-ssi and Jeong-ssi, lost their lives after deliveries outside the palace. Thereafter, the king permitted concubines to deliver their babies within the palace. According to the *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*, sometime between the early-seventeenth century (1619) and the late-seventeenth century (1688), the special organizations for delivery, *Sansil-cheong* and *Hosan-cheong*, were institutionalized. The *Sansil-cheong* had some staff members that did not exist in the *Hosan-cheong*, which were set up for deliveries by royal concubines. In the *Hosan-cheong*, a medical doctor substituted for the *Gwoncho-gwan* in performing the ritual *Gwoncho-je*. For instance, in 1897, the *Gwoncho-je* for the newborn baby of the concubine Eom-ssi (who later became YoungChin-Wang), was officiated by a medical doctor.[34]

There was another difference between the *Sansil-cheong* and the *Hosan-cheong*. The number of doctors in the *Sansil-cheong* was larger than that in the *Hosan-cheong*. In the case of the delivery for Queen MyeongSeong, there were

sixteen medical staff on duty: eleven doctors specially assigned to the king, an acupuncturist, two pharmacists, and two female nurses.[35]

On the other hand, the medical staff assigned to the concubine Eom-ssi numbered only six in total: two lower-level medical doctors, two staff for making decoctions of medicinal herbs, and two female nurses.[36] Without the special order of the king, the royal physicians assigned to the king did not assist in deliveries by royal concubines.

Despite these official regulations, in reality, the staff assigned to the *Hosan-cheong* could be quite different. In the late Joseon, if a queen was unable to produce an heir, the king would select a *Gantaek-Hugung* to provide him with an heir. If she became pregnant, even though she was a concubine, a *Sansil-cheong* (usually only allowed for birth by a queen) was organized for the concubine's delivery.

However, *Seungeun-Hugung* from among court ladies still had no benefits as such. There was a court lady named Eom-ssi, who was the object of King Gojong's love. On September 25, 1897, she gave birth to a baby, but did not receive the official title of royal concubine until then. On the day she successfully delivered a boy, King Gojong ordered the organization of a *Hosan-cheong* for postnatal care and following rituals. Three days after delivery, she received the second highest title, *gwiin*, and rose to become a royal concubine.[37]

The Delivery Room

When preparing for the birth of a royal baby, many rooms were set aside. Among these, the most important was the delivery room. Prior to giving birth, the queen would live in a building called Gyotae-jeon when she was at the Gyeonbok Palace, and in a building called Daejo-jeon when at the Changduk Palace. The meaning of both *Gyotae-jeon* and *Daejo-jeon* here is "wishing for queens to have many children." For example, the first delivery room for Queen MyeongSeong was in the Gyotae-jeon at Gyeongbok Palace. Of course, there were exceptions. For example, for her third delivery, she lived in the Gwanmul-heon at Changduk Palace, where the crown prince usually resided. This change in residence was most likely due to the damage caused by the big fire at Gyeongbok Palace.

In cases of delivery by concubines, especially by a king's favorite concubine, the concubine's living quarters prior to giving birth were usually located near the king's office. Eomssi, concubine of King Gojong, gave birth to her baby at the Sukong-jae at Gyeongun Palace, where King Gojong was in residence during that period.

Once the location of the delivery room was determined, it then needed to be decorated to ensure a safe delivery and future fertility. The decorating process, known as *sansil-baeseol*, transformed the space from one for daily use into a sacred space. This was a very complicated process that required many types of materials and people.

According to the *Manual for a Queen's Childbirth*, the delivery room was decorated with auspicious charms. A "hasten-birth talisman" was attached to the north wall of the delivery room to speed up the delivery process. A "tenant talisman" was attached to the same place as a request to the Daoist gods for permission to use the room. Both of these charms were drawn in red.

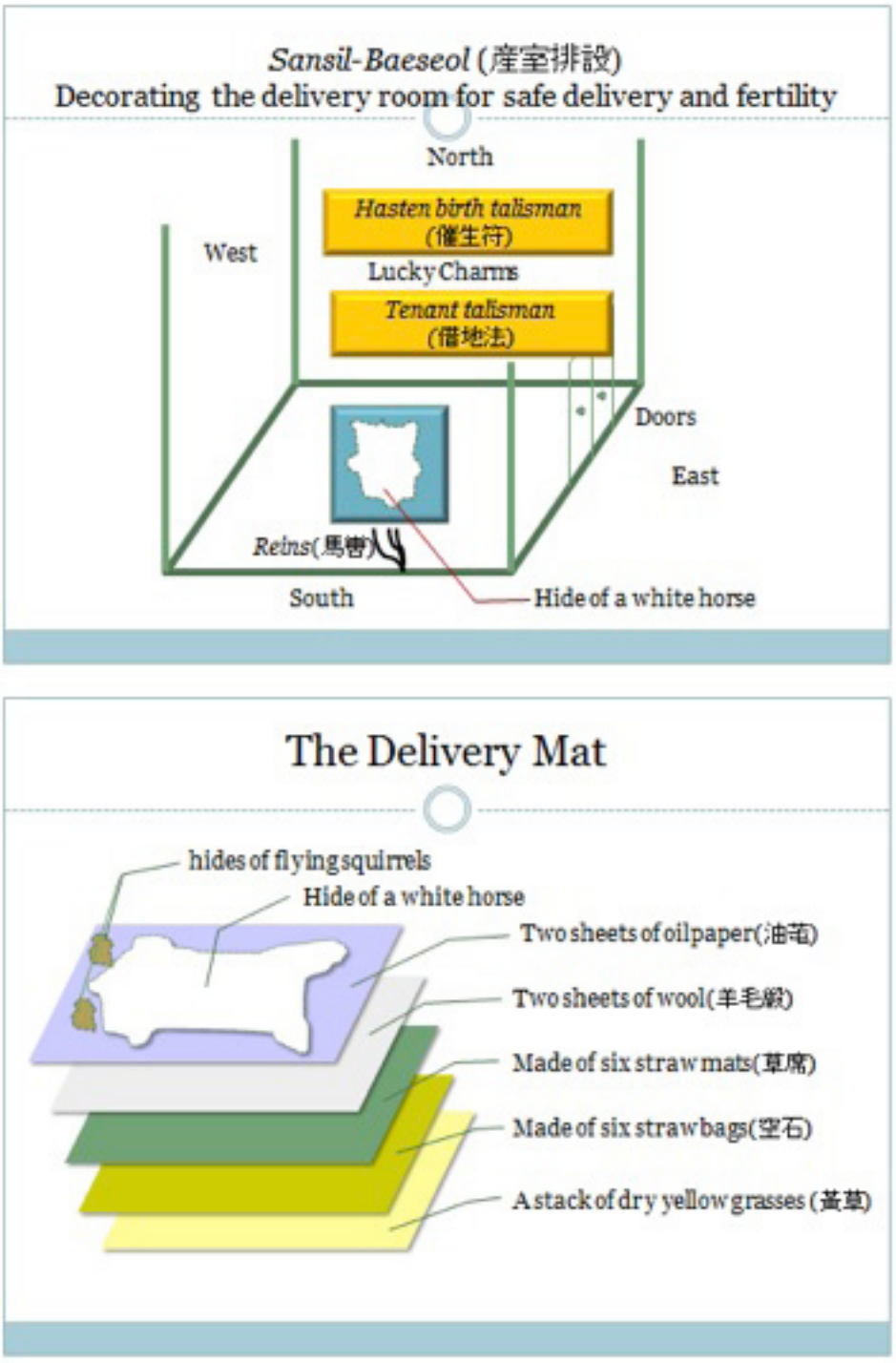

Fig. 2. *Sansil-Baeseol*

A special mat was placed in the delivery room, upon which the pregnant woman would lie down to give birth. The special mat consisted of several layers of different materials. At the very bottom of the mat would be placed a stack of dry yellow grass. The next layer was made of six straw bags. This was followed by a sheet of six straw mats, then two sheets of wool, upon which were layered two sheets of oilpaper, designed to collect the various secretions from the delivery. On the very top was placed the hide from a white horse. The hide would be placed so that the horse's head faced in the direction most auspicious for a safe delivery. The horse's tail corresponded to the direction where the placenta would be placed after delivery. The hides of two flying squirrels were then placed on either side of the horse's head. Last, under the horse's head was spread a type of ramie.

There were also reins made out of deerskin which served as a sort of handle. This was installed on the wall behind the delivery bed for the woman to grab onto while in labor. If the delivery did not occur during the planned month, the direction deemed auspicious for a safe delivery was changed resulting in all the materials having to be rearranged to face the new direction. These materials, including the charms, special mat, and white horse's hide were believed to help the woman giving birth to have a safe delivery and to protect her life as well as that of her newborn baby.

The Role of Women in Assisting with Delivery and Childcare

There were four groups assigned to assist royal woman with the delivery and childcare. The first group consisted of male doctors in the *Sansil-cheong*. The second group consisted of women who were directly involved in the birth and subsequent childcare. The third group belonged to the organization that provided a variety of delivery supplies. The last group was responsible for miscellaneous tasks. The following discussion will focus on women involved in the second group, namely in the delivery process and childcare.

There were two "female nurses" assigned to the *Sansil-cheong*. Their responsibilities included attending to the pregnant woman, keeping a close eye on her condition and reporting it to the male doctors, bringing to the delivery room the prescriptions that the male doctors gave them, and administering those prescriptions. These female nurses, among the best of the nurses, belonged to the medical center for the royal family. They were trained in checking the pulse, acupuncture, and gynecology.

There were also three to four women assigned to the delivery room. According to the handbook *Useful Tips for Delivery and Childcare*, which was written in the nineteenth century, these women had been "selected among those old, knowledgeable, docile, and careful women outside [the palace]" to assist with the delivery by "... hold[ing] her on the bed to help delivery."[38] It is possible that one of them played the role of midwife.

The rest of the women taking part in delivery were the *Bongbo-Buin*, the *Aji*, the woman's mother, a wet nurse, and court ladies. The *Bongbo-Buin* was the king's former nanny and held a high position at court. She was qualified to take part in every event of the royal family. The *Aji* was the queen's lady-in-waiting and came to the palace with the queen after her wedding ceremony. She was the closest woman to the queen in the palace. The queen's mother also entered the

palace in advance to assist her daughter during delivery. A wet nurse served as the nanny for the newborn baby, and a babysitter was selected among the court ladies in the palace.

Royal newborns were breastfed by a wet nurse. The wet nurse was carefully selected to ensure the good health of the royal child.[39] She was required to be both healthy and have a good disposition. The wet nurse would serve the royal child for their whole life, following them even after they became married. She was often a slave attached to one of the government offices.

The *Gungjung-balgi* records the third delivery by Queen MyeongSeong, which assessed the contribution of the women participating in delivery and nursing. For example, some parts of the *Gungjung-balgi* explain how court ladies were paid for being part of the queen's delivery. On the seventh day after Queen MyeongSeong gave birth, the women who had assisted in the delivery all received money. The amount of money given to each differed according to the roles they played during the delivery. The funds were provided by the pregnant woman's family and relatives. In this instance, those who received money were court ladies, a wet nurse, a *Bongbo-Buin*, and an *Aji*. The highest ranks of the court ladies were given 50 *nyang* (Joseon unit of money) respectively. The maid attending the queen was given 30 *nyang* and the former wet nurse for the king 20 *nyang*, the wet nurse was given the least amount, 15 *nyang*. Other lower-ranking court ladies in attendance to the queen were given a little money as well.

Another *Gungjung-balgi* notes that on the hundredth day after her childbirth, those who helped raise the child were given cloth and firewood. These recipients belonged to the palace where the eldest son of the king lived. The cloth and firewood were provided by the woman's mother-in-law. The senior court lady among those babysitting the king's eldest son received the largest amount among them.

According to another *Gungjung-balgi*, on the same day her family gave some money to women who were court ladies, the *Aji*, the *Bongbo-Buin*, and the wet nurse. The amount of money given to each differed slightly from that given to them on the seventh day. The money given to the maid attending the queen and the former wet nurse of the king decreased slightly, while the money given to the wet nurse increased slightly. This reveals that the role of a wet nurse caring for the child grew more important with time.

Conclusion

Until recently, childbirth has been recognized not as a social and cultural event, but as a merely physiological function. As the history of women has gained importance since the late-twentieth century, pregnancy and childbirth have now begun to receive the attention they are due.

The ruling aristocrats ran the Joseon Dynasty with the goal of establishing a Confucian utopia. To achieve this, they adopted the Confucian patrilineal system. As a result, it became more and more important for Joseon women to carry out their duties of keeping house, especially giving birth and taking care of children. Only women who fulfilled these duties exercised power in the family.

The fertility of royal women meant not only prosperity for the royal family, but also for Joseon Korea. As a result, fertility among royal woman received

more attention than that of women of other classes. As members of the upper privileged social classes in Joseon society, royal women could deliver the king's babies. As we have seen, there were two groups of royal women: queens and royal concubines. Royal concubines were further divided according to social status: *Gantaek-Hugung* and *Seungeun-Hugung*. While *Gantaek-Hugung* were selected from *yangban* (ruling aristocratic) families to become the king's concubines, *Seungeun-Hugung* were usually selected from court ladies of a lower class.

The desire for fertility was conspicuously revealed in royal weddings. In the nineteenth century, in particular, folding screens upon which were painted the *Painting of the Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi* were set up in the detached palace. Here, a woman from a private house outside the palace received education in preparation prior to her transformation through marriage into a royal woman. The placement of the painting sent a clear message to the young bride that having many children like Guo Ziyi was the goal of royal women.

The concubine system for the royal family's fertility was arranged from the beginning of the Joseon Dynasty. However, the system operated differently in the early and late Joseon. As Joseon society became more Confucian, the differences between wife and concubine became more distinct and discrimination between legitimate and illegitimate children became more serious. Though this trend affected all of Joseon society, the discrimination against illegitimate children in the royal family was not as serious because they were, in the end, the king's offspring. However, by the late Joseon, the number of concubines steadily decreased. When it comes to *Gantaek-Hugung*, for example, they were selected only when the queen at that time was infertile and another concubine, on behalf of her, had to give birth to a royal baby who would succeed to the throne. If the concubine gave birth to the crown prince, she earned a good position in the royal family.

Infertility among queens was quite common in seventeenth- to eighteenth-century Korea, however, fertility among queens slightly increased in the nineteenth century. However, because infant mortality was also high, the number of royal children actually did not increase.

When a royal woman got pregnant or gave birth, in order to help her deliver a baby, the king would order the establishment of one of two temporary organizations that belonged to the medical center for the royal family. The scale of these temporary organizations and the status of the people in charge were determined by the social status of the pregnant or delivering women.

In the case of a queen's delivery, they set up a *Sansil-cheong* directed by three managerial officials. To prepare for an actual emergency in delivery, it had male medical doctors including a doctor for the king, and two female nurses. It was supplied by each government department with medication and necessities for delivery.

In the case of a royal concubine's delivery, they set up the *Hosan-cheong*. However, unlike with *Sansil-cheong*, there were not three managerial officials in charge. The male doctors replaced them instead. The social status of male doctors also was not higher than those in *Sansil-cheong* and their number was less than

those in *Sansil-cheong*. Nonetheless, the medication and necessities for delivery were supplied with the same amount as in the *Sansil-cheong*.

After the eighteenth century, with several queens in succession being infertile, the royal family began to bring in *Gantaek-Hugung* in order to ensure a successor to the throne. When the selected *Gantaek-Hugung* got pregnant, though she was only a concubine, the king ordered the establishment of a *Sansil-cheong* that was similar to that of queens.

For the history of women in Joseon Korea, the theme of childbirth and childcare can show us their lives in detail. As stated above, however, the theme has been neglected and there have been few studies on the subject. This has been due in part to lack of understanding about the importance of the topic, scarce data available, and lack of an established research methodology.

By examining the deliveries of royal women's children and the cultural system related to it, this article widens the horizon of understanding about the hierarchical system among royal women, the importance of delivery, and how the distinctions of social status were revealed in the delivery process.

Toward the nineteenth century, royal women's deliveries began to become a political issue, as declining royal fertility diminished the royal family's authority and the king's power. The meaning of delivery varied between social groups, notably the royal family and the common people. To the women of the royal family, delivery was of public importance. It was state-controlled, institutionalized, and ritualized. In the process, childbirth became closely related to the Confucianism that the royal family had adopted as their political ideology, which eventually created a new culture for royal women.

Figures

Fig. 1. *Painting of the Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi*. Accession Number: Deoksu 3153. Each 143.9 x 52.7cm. Panels 3 to 6 out of 8 panels. Source: http://www.museum.go.kr.

Fig. 2. *Sansil-Baeseol*.

Glossary

A Great Cause for Congratulations	*GyeongsulDaegyeong*	庚戌大慶
Acupuncturist	*Chimui*	鍼醫
Annals of the Joseon Dynasty	*Joseon wangjo sillok*	朝鮮王朝實錄
Babysitter	*Bomo*	保姆
Book of Genealogical Lineage of the Joseon Royal Family	*Seonwon-gyebo-giryak*	璿源系譜記略
Book of Odes	*Sigyeong*	詩經
Cause for congratulations for having numerous children like swarm of grasshoppers	*JongSa-Ji-Kyeung*	螽斯之慶
Cause for congratulations for the kingdom	*JongSa-Ji-Kyeung*	宗社之慶
Clan rules	*jongbeop*	宗法
Concubine receiving king's grace	*Seungeun-Hugung*	承恩後宮
Court ladies	*gungnyeo*	宮女
Daily Records of the Secretariat	*Seungjeongwon ilgi*	承政院日記
Detached palace	*byeolgung*	別宮
Diary about a Royal Concubine's Delivery	*Hosan-cheong ilgi*	護産廳日記
Fertility	*Dasan*	多産
Formal letter of appointment made of jade	*Ok-ChaekMun*	玉冊文
Gods of soil and grain	*SaJik*	社稷
"Hasten-birth talisman"	*Choesaengbu*	催生符
Inner Palace Registries	*Gungjung-balgi*	宮中件記
King's eldest son	*WonJa*	元子
King's nanny	*Bongbo-Buin*	奉保夫人
King's poetry	*Eoje-si*	御製詩
Main palace	Jounggung	正宮
Manual for a Queen's Childbirth	*Sansilcheongchonggyo*	産室廳總規
National Code	*Gyeonggukdaejeon*	經國大典
Officer in charge of the *Gwoncho-je*	*Gwoncho-gwan*	捲草官
Painting of the Luxurious Life of Guo Ziyi	*Gwakbunyanghaengnakdo*	郭汾陽行樂圖
Palace Matron	*SangGung*	尙宮
Queen's lady-in-waiting	*Aji*	阿之
Receive the king's grace	*Seungeun*	承恩
Ritual held on seventh day after birth	*Gwoncho-je*	捲草祭
Royal ancestral temple	Jongmyo	宗廟
Royal physicians assigned to the king	*Eoui*	御醫
Successor to first queen	*Gye-Bi*	繼妃
"Tenant talisman"	*Chajibub*	借地法
Three high officials	*Samjejo*	三提調
Useful Tips for Delivery and Childcare	*Limsanyejibub*	臨産豫知法
Wet nurse	*Yumo*	乳母

Notes

1 Brigitte Jordan 1993.

2 Kim Eun-Shil 1996, p. 126.

3 Kim Jisoo 2010.

4 Han Yang Myung 1999. He pointed out that the previous "folk knowledge of childbirth" has limits and advised for the studies to be more systematic.

5 Kim Joohee 2007.

6 Kim Yongsuk 1987, pp. 245–67. See also Shin Myong Ho 2002; and Kim Ho 2002.

7 Ju Youngha et al. 2005, p. 18.

8 This important source is often overlooked.

9 *Taejong Sillok* 太宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Taejong], vol. 27, January 16, 1414 (the 14th year of King Taejong's reign).

10 *Danjong Sillok* 端宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Danjong], vol. 10, January 22, 1454 (the 2nd year of King Danjong's reign). *Ok-Chaek* 玉冊 is a kind of book in which letters were inscribed in honor of kings' or queens' virtues. When a lady was installed queen, the *Ok-ChaekMun* was made with the installing document. *Ok-ChaekMun* were made of jade into which the letters were inscribed.

11 *Kyeonbin-Kimssi-Chaekbong-Gyomeong* 慶嬪金氏冊封敎命 [Letter of Appointment for Lady Kim as King Heonjong's Consort Kyeongbin], 1847, 36.8 × 295 cm. Seongnam: Jangse-gak Library, Academy of Korean Studies.

12 *Gojong Sillok* 高宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Gojong], vol. 3, March 22, 1866 (the 3rd year of King Gojong's reign).

13 *Heonjong Sillok* 憲宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Heonjong], vol. 14, July 18, 1847 (the 13th year of King Heonjong's reign).

14 A hanging board in 1730, 22.5 × 62 cm., National Palace Museum of Korea, Seoul.

15 *Sukjong Sillok* 肅宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Sukjong], vol. 30, April 27, 1696 (the 22nd year of King Gojong's reign); and vol. 37, September 14, 1696 (the 28th year of King Gojong's reign).

16 Yi Seong-mi 1994, p. 87; see also Park Eunkyeong 2012, p. 93.

17 "JeGwakjauihaengnakdo Saswja 題郭子義行樂圖賜世子," in *Yeolseong Euje* 列聖御製, vol. 10, no. 2. Seoul: Seoul National University, 2002, p. 319.

18 Jeong Youngmi 1999; see also Yi Seong-mi et al. 2005, pp. 25–26.

19 Kim Jiyoung 2011.

20 Lee Mi Sun 2012.

21 Kim Yongsuk, pp. 4–87.

22 *Yeogwanjedoui YeonHyeok* 女官制度의 沿革 (K2-2032). Seongnam: Jangseo-gak Library, Academy of Korean Studies.

23 *Taejong Sillok* 太宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Taejong], vol. 3, January 08, 1402 (the 2nd year of King Taejong's reign).

24 Kim Jiyoung 2011, pp. 276–80.

25 *Seonwon-gyebo-giryak* 璿源系譜記略 [Book of Genealogical Lineage of the Joseon Royal Family] (k2-1031). Seongnam: Jangseo-gak Library, Academy of Korean Studies.

26 *Jongyu-nyeon Hosan-cheong-So-Ilgi*.

27 Kim Jiyoung 2010b, appendix 1.

28 Kim Yongsuk, p. 256.

29 *Diary of the Royal Secretariat*, vol. 50, December 01, 1873 (the 10th year of King Gojong's reign).

[30] Ibid., vol. 50, December 24, 1873 (the 10th year of King Gojong's reign).

[31] Ibid., vol. 50, December 25, 1873 (the 10th year of King Gojong's reign).

[32] Ibid., vol. 50, December 30, 1873 (the 10th year of King Gojong's reign).

[33] Kim Jiyoung 2012, pp. 141–61.

[34] *Jongyu-nyeon Hosan-cheong-So-Ilgi* (K2-3618).

[35] *Diary of the Royal Secretariat*, vol. 50, February 14, 1874 (the 11th year of King Gojong's reign).

[36] *Jongyu-nyeon Hosan-cheong-So-Ilgi* (K2-3618).

[37] Kim Jiyoung 2010a.

[38] *Limsan-Yeji-Bup* 臨産豫知法 (K6-4861). Seongnam: Jangseo-gak Library, Academy of Korean Studies.

[39] *Sunjo Sillok* 純祖實錄 [Veritable Records of King Sunjo], vol. 12, August 11, 1809 (the 9th year of King Sunjo's reign). The selection process for wet nurses was also described in *Donguibogam* [Principles and Practices of Eastern Medicine], which is an encyclopedic bible of medical knowledge and treatment techniques, compiled in Korea in 1613. It was edited by Heo Jun with the collective support of medical experts and literati according to royal instructions.

References

Primary Sources

Danjong Sillok 端宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Danjong], vol. 10, January 22, 1454 (the 2nd year of King Danjong's reign).

Gojong Sillok 高宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Gojong], vol. 3, March 22, 1866 (the 3rd year of King Gojong's reign).

Heonjong Sillok 憲宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Heonjong], vol. 14, July 18, 1847 (the 13th year of King Heonjong's reign).

Jongyu-nyeon Hosan-cheong-So-Ilgi (K2-3618). Seongnam: Jangseo-gak Library, Academy of Korean Studies.

Joseon Wangjo sillok 朝鮮王朝實錄 [Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty], translated and edited by Kuksa Pyeonchan wiwonhoe. Available at http//sillok.history.go.kr.

Limsan-Yeji-Bup 臨産豫知法 (K6-4861). Seongnam: Jangseo-gak Library, Academy of Korean Studies.

Seonwon-gyebo-giryak 璿源系譜記略 [Book of the Genealogical Lineage of the Joseon Royal Family] (K2-1031). Seongnam: Jangseo-gak Library, Academy of Korean Studies.

Seungjeongwonilgi 承政院日記 [Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat of the Joseon Dynasty]. Available at http//sjw.history.go.kr.

Sukjong Sillok 肅宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Sukjong], vol. 30, April 27, 1696 (the 22nd year of King Gojong's reign); and vol. 37, September 14, 1696 (the 28th year of King Gojong's reign).

Sunjo Sillok 純祖實錄 [Veritable Records of King Sunjo], vol. 12, August 11, 1809 (the 9th year of King Sunjo's reign).

Taejong Sillok 太宗實錄 [Veritable Records of King Taejong], vol. 27, January 16, 1414 (the 14th year of King Taejong's reign); and vol. 3, January 08, 1402 (the 2nd year of King Taejong's reign).

Yeogwanjedoui YeonHyeok 女官制度의 沿革 (K2-2032). Seongnam: Jangseo-gak Library, Academy of Korean Studies.

Secondary Sources

Han Yang Myung. 1999. "Hanguk Sansokui Chegyejeok Ihaeruluihan Siron 한국 산속의 체계적 이해를 위한 시론" [Systmatic Understanding of Birth Customs in Korea], in *Asian Comparative Folklore*, vol. 16, pp. 109–27.

Jeong Youngmi. 1999. *Joseonhugi* Gwakbunyanghaengnakdo *Yeongu* 조선후기 곽분양행락도 연구 [Study on Paintings of "Luxurious Life in the Style of Kue Tzu-I" of the Late Choson Period]. Seongnam-si: Academy of Korean Studies.

Jordan, Brigitte. 1993 (1978). *Birth in Four Cultures: A Cross-Cultural Investigation of Childbirth in Yucatan, Holland, Sweden, and the United States*. Long Grave, Ill.: Waveland Press.

Ju Youngha et al. (eds.). 2005. *Joseon Wangsilui Chulsanmunwha*. Seoul: Ihoe.

Kim Eun-Shil. 1996. "Chulsanmunwhawa Yeoseong" [Korean Middle-Class Women's Culture of Childbirth], in *Journal of Korean Women's Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2.

Kim Ho. 2002. "Joseonhugi Wangsilui Chulsanpunggyeong," in *Joseonui Jeongchiwa Sahoe*. Seoul: Jipmundang, pp. 754–70.

Kim Jisoo. 2010. "Voices Heard: Women's Right to Petition in Late Choson Korea." Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University.

Kim Jiyoung. 2010a. "Some Clues to the Childbirth Culture of the Joseon Royal Family: Analyses of the Gungjungbalgi (宮中件記) in the JangSeoGak Library," in *Journal of the Janseogak Library*, vol. 23, pp. 3–34.

——. 2010b. "Josen wangsilui chulsan munhwa yeongu: Yeoksa inyuhagjeok jeopgeun 조선 왕

실의 출산문화 연구: 역사인류학적 접근" [Childbirth in the Joseon Royal Family: An Approach of Historical Anthropology]. Ph.D. dissertation, AKS Graduate School of Korean Studies.

——. 2011. "Joseonsidae wangsil yeoseongui chulsannyeok: Sigibyeol bueonhwa chuiwa sahoemunhwajeok hamui 조선시대 왕실 여성의 출산력: 시기별 변화추이와 사회문화적 함의" [Fertility of Royal Women in the Joseon Dynasty: Fertility Transition and Its Socio-Cultural Explanations], in *Korean Studies Quarterly*, vol. 34, no. 3 (Autumn), pp. 260–99.

Kim Joohee. 2007. "2000 yeondae Dosi Yeoseongui Chulsanmunwhawa 년대 도시 여성의 출산문화: 문화변동의 장" [Culture of Childbirth among Young Urban Korean Women: The Perspective of Culture Change], in *Korean Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 40, no. 2, pp. 253–86.

Kim Yongsuk. 1987. *Joseonjo Kungjung Pungsok Yeongu* 朝鮮朝 宮中風俗 研究. Seoul: Ilchisa.

Lee Mi Sun. 2012. "Josensidae *Hugung* Yeongu 朝鮮時代 後宮研究" [A Study of *Hugung* in the Joseon Dynasty Period]. Ph.D. dissertation, AKS Graduate School of Korean Studies.

Park Eunkyeong. 2012. "Joseonhugi Wangsilgaryeeong Byeongpung Yeongu 조선후기 왕실가례용 병풍연구" [A Study of Screens for Royal Wedding Ceremonies in the Late Joseon Dynasty]. Ph.D. dissertation, Seoul National University.

Shin Myong Ho. 2002. "Joseonsidae Kungjungui Chulsanpungsokgwa Kungjunguihak 조선시대 궁중의 출산풍속과 궁중의학" [A Study on Court-Childbirth Customs and Court Medicine in the Chosun Dynasty], in *Journal of Korean Historical Manuscripts*, vol. 21, pp. 156–76.

Yi Seong-mi. 1994. "Jangseogak sojang Joseonwangjo garyedogsm uigwe-ui midulsajeok gochal 장서각 소장 조선왕조 가례도감 의궤의 미술사적 고찰" [A Study from the View of History of Art on *garyedogam uigwe* in the Joseon Dynasty], in *Jangseogak sojang Joseonwangjo garyedogsm uigwe*. Seongnam: Academy of Korean Studies.

Yi Seong-mi et al. (eds.). 2005. *Joseon Wangsilui Misulmunwha*. Seoul: Daewaosa.

Kim Jiyoung studies cultural and gender history of Korea. She received her Ph.D. from the AKS Graduate School of Korean Studies in Korea. She was a researcher at the Jangseogak Archives in Korea from 2003 to 2010, and held a postdoctoral fellowship at Seoul National University in Korea from 2011 to 2012. She is a researcher at the Institute of Cultural Studies at Seoul National University. She has taught "Korean History and Culture," "Introduction to Cultural Anthropology," and "Cross-Cultural Studies" at Hansung University and the Academy of Korean Studies. She is participating in publishing a series of books called "A Library of the Royal Family's Culture."