

Refereed article

# Remembrance in the Making: The King's Father and the Construction of Collective Memories of Crown Prince Sado in Late Eighteenth-Century Korea\*

Florian Pölking

## Summary

The study of collective memory, cultures of memory, collective identity, and the relationship between memory, identity, and power has gained importance in recent years. In the Korean context, a growing number of studies primarily focus on issues and phenomena of the period since the end of the Second World War. However, research on premodern Korean cultures of memory has not only revealed major insights into developments in the past, but maybe more importantly has established a connection between Korea's past and present. This study focuses on the memory of Crown Prince Sado, and particularly on its construction by his son, King Chǒngjo. From the beginning of his reign, Chǒngjo followed a specific policy to restore the reputation and status of his father with the aim of reconciling his personal and the official memory — thereby securing his own legitimacy. Carefully navigating the political landscape as well as the Confucian principles of his time, Chǒngjo managed to follow up on his policy through the establishment of a variety of tangible as well as abstract sites of memory. The article shows how these sites were entangled and invested with a specific meaning for Chǒngjo's contemporaries, but also how they are still meaningful in present-day Korea too.

**Keywords:** Chǒngjo, Hwasǒng, Sado, collective memory, sites of memory, ūigwe

**Florian Pölking** is lecturer (PostDoc) at the departments of East Asian Politics and Korean Studies of the Faculty of East Asian Studies at Ruhr-University Bochum. [florian.poelking@rub.de](mailto:florian.poelking@rub.de), ORCID: 0000-0002-3311-8609

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## Introduction

The movie *The Throne* (original Korean title: *Sado*) was one of the biggest box office hits in Korea in 2015, having attracted almost two million viewers after only six days (Chosun 2015). It ranks sixth among the highest-grossing films of 2015 with approximately 6.2 million cinema admissions and domestic gross receipts of around USD 42 million. The historical drama revolves around the life of Crown Prince Sado (1735–1762) and his fateful relationship with his father, King Yŏngjo (1694–1776, reign 1724–1776), which eventually led to the former’s tragic dying in a rice chest. While the movie neglects the complicated details of the politico-ideological context, it focuses instead on the family tragedy. Based on this interpretation it obtained a number of national as well as international awards and was nominated as Korea’s contribution to the 88th Academy Awards (Oscars) for best foreign-language film in 2016 (IMDB 2015; Kobiz 2015).

The movie is only one of the more recent and internationally visible outcomes of a number of different depictions of this historical event. The history of Crown Prince Sado and the circumstances of his death have been narrated in books, comics, movies, and television serials at least since the 1950s. Since the early years of the new century, meanwhile, that tale has been integrated into South Korea’s politics of cultural promotion by re-narrating historical events and figures within the frame of the so-called Korean wave (*hallyu*) and its nation-building project.<sup>1</sup> In this regard, the “resurrection” of historical figures by pop culture — meant to serve popular taste and commercial interests — became political again, most pronounced by the Global Korea policy of president Lee Myung-bak (2008-2013). This also was not least a consequence of the usage of nationalist interpretations of Korean history that have their roots in the Japanese colonial period and in the postcolonial historiography (Joongang 2014).<sup>2</sup>

While the story of Sado himself has more or less continually found its way into the popular culture of South Korea, a second event would attract public attention only from the late 1990s on: the reenactment of certain elements of the culture of memory of Sado, specifically the royal procession from the capital Seoul to his tomb near the city of Suwŏn on the occasion of the 60th birthdays of both Sado and his wife, Lady Hyegyŏng (1735–1824). This procession, supposed to be the biggest of its kind in Korean history, was only reenacted from 2016 onward, 221 years after it originally took place (King Jeongjo Royal Parade 2019).<sup>3</sup> This roughly coincided with the repatriation of a set of “ritual protocols” (*ũigwe*) in 2011 that contained a contemporary documentation of the events but which had been looted by French troops in 1866; they were granted recognition in the UNESCO Memory of the World

1 For an introductory as well as closer reading into the context of the Korean wave in its multiple dimensions, please refer to Kim Kyŏng-hyŏn and Choe Youngmin (2014) or Kim Youna (2013b).

2 For an overview, see Choi Jong-suk (2016) or Park Chan-Seung (2007).

3 It was reenacted on a small scale by the city of Suwŏn from 1996, and expanded together with the cities of Seoul and Hwasŏng as well as further sponsors in 2016.

Register already in 2007.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore in 2013 the Korean Broadcaster KBS produced a lengthy documentary on the procession based on the respective *üigwe*. The yearly reenactment was by far the most visible of these different references, spanning almost two full days and widely covered by national media, comprising more than 4,000 participants in historical costume, and leading to roadblocks and traffic jams along the way.

The basic focus of modern popular depictions of Sado and his remembrance thus seems to be the family tragedy. However, it is interwoven into the cultural politics of present-day Korea so as to construct a shared national identity by narrating a specific version of the country's history that Koreans can easily connect with and that at the same time can be presented internationally. This holds especially true for the sublime character and the public grandeur of the 1795 procession in its reenactment as a colorful and neatly orchestrated modern perception of the historic event that tries to position eighteenth-century Korea within the current master narrative.

In this way the usage of the original events is not so much different from the past, in that their remembrance essentially was of a politico-ideological nature at two specific instances in time.<sup>5</sup> Alongside the original event, the first was the project undertaken by King Chǒngjo (1752–1800, r. 1776–1800) to rehabilitate his father and thereby secure his own legitimacy by means of reconstructing the respective collective memory. To this end the king rearranged specific aspects of the culture of memory of the crown prince to position him as a legitimate ancestor, a project that was to define most of his policy and last his whole reign.

The second instance meanwhile was the proclamation of the Empire of Korea (Taehan Cheguk) in 1897. To legitimize Kojong (1852–1919, r. 1864–1907) as emperor, his genealogy had to be revised according to Korean Confucian ideology. To this end Sado was elevated to the status of Emperor, and subsequently Kojong was recast from his marginal family line as now Sado's fourth-generation direct descendant — which had not been possible without Chǒngjo's preceding politics. While these two instances are closely intertwined, this article will focus on the politics of remembrance by Chǒngjo during his reign, not least because these events seem to have had the greatest impact on our modern memory — as depicted in the phenomena mentioned above.

The argument is based on the hypothesis that the king's policy was to construct a specific collective memory of his father for his own legitimacy in the context of power politics and factional disputes, with the aim to overcome the rivalry surrounding the whole matter and to reconcile public and personal memory.

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4 For a comprehensive introduction to the genre of *üigwe*, please refer for example to Yi Sǒng-mi (2008), Han (2005), and Pölkling (2018).

5 For a comprehensive study of a similar case, see for example Park Saeyoung (2010) on the construction of the memory of Yi Sunshin (1545–1598) by then president Park Chung Hee (1917–1979).

Chǒngjo's affection for his father and for his mother, Hyegyǒng, played a crucial role in his policymaking, and was one reason for critiques from aristocratic scholar-officials on numerous instances. However that affection translated into specific policies and political decisions according to Confucian ideological principles of Korean kingship, being intertwined with actual power politics that formed the collective memories of his father according to the needs of his own particular present. While these politics have been studied from the perspective of political power, this article will focus rather on Chǒngjo's efforts vis-à-vis the construction of "sites of memory."<sup>6</sup>

The paper is organized into three parts. First, it will provide an outline of the concepts of "collective memory" and "cultures of memory." While there has been an abundance of publications on a broad range of topics regarding memory in general as well as on modern Korea, the literature on premodern Korean contexts still remains rather scarce. The first part will therefore elucidate the respective concepts while focusing also on their application to late eighteenth-century Korea. The second part will then begin with an introduction to the death of Sado and the circumstances surrounding it, providing the basis for the understanding of Chǒngjo's policies. This section will then bring together the historical events — or, more specifically, the means by which the king tried to manipulate the respective collective memories of different interest groups — diachronically with recourse to the concept of collective memory. The last part will take up the results of these policies and establish links between the original events, the proclamation of the Empire of Korea in 1897, as well as circumstances today. It will show that the political implications of the history of Sado and his remembrance were still of particular importance until the end of the Chosǒn dynasty that came about with the Japanese colonial period — specifically, by 1910 at the latest.

## Collective memory, cultures of memory, and Memory Studies

Research on memory and remembrance has gained increasing attention across a growing number of academic disciplines. It has come to the point where the idea of Memory Studies as an emerging interdisciplinary but independent scientific field has itself become attractive.<sup>7</sup> In Germany in particular, the studies of Jan and Aleida Assmann have greatly contributed to the development of Memory Studies. They gained particular importance with a new push on memory due to the looming disappearance of witnesses to Nazi Germany and the Shoa and questions revolving

6 Among the numerous works on the topic, see Kim Kyǒng-hyǒn (2013) and Lovins (2019) for comparative approaches in terms of "absolutism," "enlightenment," and "early modernism." For a more general overview and problematization of research on late eighteenth-century Korea, see Kim and Macrae (2019).

7 See the introduction to Olick et al. (2011) or Dutceac Segesten and Wüstenberg (2017).

around an appropriate remembrance, the modes and functions of memory, and the existence and understanding of collective memory.<sup>8</sup>

This interest in Memory Studies has neither been confined to Central Europe nor to the demands of our immediate present or very recent past. Memory has also been studied regarding historical contexts reaching as far back as Egyptian antiquity and even for pre-textual cultures, not least by Jan Assmann and Tonio Hölscher (1988) among others. Memory thereby has proven, however it might be criticized, a resourceful object of inquiry not only across academic disciplines but also across time and space (Chedgzoy et al. 2018). These characteristics make it all the more important especially for Area Studies, including Korean Studies, and for the so-called *Kleine Fächer* (“small subjects”). It serves as a platform not only for deductive research and the application to seemingly disjointed case studies but also can inform and qualify the theoretical approach itself, establishing hitherto unforeseen connections and providing seminal knowledge for and connection to the so-called *Großdisziplinen* (“major subjects”) — for example the Social Sciences or Political Science.

The study of memory in as well as of Korea that specifically refers to the quasi-disciplinary contexts of Memory Studies has roughly coincided with the developments observed above. Since the middle of the first decade of the new millennium onward, many related studies have been published on a broad range of topics. These developments eventually led to a special issue of the journal *Memory Studies* in 2013. However, the majority of these studies deal with issues of modern Korea, specifically the period after the liberation from Japanese colonial rule. In 2010 Kim Sun Joo wrote that “[the] remaking of the past is not the monopoly of modernity” (Kim Sun Joo 2010: 563), introducing her article on the construction of memory of a military commander during the Chosŏn dynasty, and picking up on it again in her subsequent monograph (Kim Sun Joo 2013a).<sup>9</sup> Only a small number of studies followed that dealt with the historical contexts to the construction of memory. This paper will therefore add to these by applying the concepts of collective memory, cultures of memory, and sites of memory to late eighteenth-century Korea.<sup>10</sup>

The concept of sites of memory (*lieux de mémoire*) was developed by French sociologist Pierre Nora in the 1980s. It is famously summed up by the quote: “There are *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieus de mémoire*, real environments of memory” (Nora 1989: 7). However, Nora based his findings on the observation that the common denominators of the French nation had vanished due to developments from the mid-nineteenth century onward, which he

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8 For a more comprehensive overview that exceeds the scope of this article, see for example Pollmann and Kuijpers (2013).

9 For the early modern European context, see for example Pollmann (2017).

10 The term *lieu de memoire* was translated differently into English. I will use sites of memory here, for this is the term that was used by Nora and Marc Roudebush in the English translation of his original French introduction to his seminal work *Les Lieux de mémoire* in 1989.

condenses into the term “acceleration” (*accélération*) — that is, the rupture of memory through an eternal present and the consequent distinction between memory and history (Nora 1989: 8).

While Nora maintains a distinction between memory and history, he neglects what Maurice Halbwachs earlier had called “social frameworks of memory” (*les cadres sociaux de la memoire*), or the social conditionality of individual memory. For Halbwachs, sites of memory belong to what he terms “tradition,” distortions of memory, which surely have their importance but still belong to the realm of history (Assmann 2005: 78f). Groups still need these socially framed spaces — “objectivations” — as symbols of their identity and ledgers of their collective memory (Assmann 2018: 39).

For Nora, however, sites of memory are exactly no constituents of some collective memory of a living group. Sites of memory become symbols, placeholders, of a bygone era, one whose existence is only fragmentarily narrated in these sites — and generally according to the needs of the respective present (Assmann 2010: 309ff). According to Nora, sites of memory are and become “sites” in three senses of the word: materially, being concrete objects or abstract cuttings of a specific historical period; functionally, in that they serve a specific function of remembrance at the time of their coming into existence; and, symbolically by intentionally entailing an aura of elevation above their objective function (Nora 1989: 18f). Sites of memory thereby function as a means to bridge or better combine history and memory, as entities separate from one another.

Jan and Aleida Assmann have provided a framework of the utmost fruitfulness for the understanding of collective memory with their research on the two *modi memoranda*: “cultural memory” (*Kulturelles Gedächtnis*) and “communicative memory” (*Kommunikatives Gedächtnis*).<sup>11</sup> While the latter corresponds roughly to the research field of “oral history,” the former is described by Jan Assmann as reference to a mythical, ancient past, decoupled from factual knowledge and defined by “remembered history” (*erinnerte Geschichte*) — which is “myth” (*Mythos*). It is manifested in the symbolic objectivations and rituals that are supposed to give sense to the present by referring to the past (Assmann 2018: 50–53). He thereby integrates the concept of sites of memory into this idea of cultural memory as one of the diverse media forms of cultural memory, next to script, pictures, or landscapes as a whole (Assmann 2018: 60f). He also relates collective memory to individual and collective identity, the “consciousness of social belonging” (Assmann 2018: 139), which connects his studies to the work on *cadres sociaux* by Halbwachs for example. It reads parallel also to Pierre Bourdieu’s work on habitus and power, as well as the social construction of reality by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann.<sup>12</sup>

11 This has been comprehensively summarized by the Assmanns themselves, but also for example by Astrid Erl (2017). This article follows these foundations in its analysis.

12 For an overview on these two concepts, please refer to Schwingel (2011) and Berger and Luckmann (2011).

Following his argument, individuals are part of different and diverse cultural subformations within a common culture. Their collective identity is based on common myths that provide answers to questions of social and cultural sense. These myths, manifested in rituals, do not have to be situated in an antiquity however; they can also be grounded in the recent past, and have to be circulated and thereby continually updated. With the example of the Israelites and Egypt, Assmann (2018: 130–160) reveals how identity can be influenced by changes in the cultural memory of a group. The collective memory constitutes one essential part of what Assmann (2018: 16f) calls “connective structures” (*konnektive Strukturen*). They connect the individuals of a certain group socially but particularly temporarily, and are reflexive in the sense that members of a common-memory collective reflect their shared identity in their individual commitment to the group (Assmann 2018: 133). For this purpose, sites of memory can serve as fixed points that float through time, sometimes space, and where the members of a given group can update their shared memory of a specific past that provides them sense for their respective present.

However, societies consist of a multitude of collectives; consequently collective identities and thus members of a society are at the same time members of several collective identity groups too. Astrid Erl (2017: 105f) summarizes these critiques in her own overview, relating the different approaches to collective identity to each other. The differentiation into normative and reconstructive types of collective identity, first articulated by Jürgen Straub (1998), enables her to locate the approaches and their respective meanings. While she situates Jan Assmann’s approach within reconstructive types, this article would like to complement this decision with a hint to the reflexiveness within the latter scholar’s concept. The mutual influence of the collective and the individual memory — and thereby identity through continuous updating, for example by means of sites of memory — not only serves reconstructive but also normative purposes, in that the dominant interpretation of memory through the specific site established by dominant actors sets binding interpretations of history and binding continuities.

Aleida Assmann (2010) complements and broadens the understanding of cultural memory by differentiation between “functional memory” (*Funktionsgedächtnis*) and “storage memory” (*Speichergedächtnis*). While the first describes living memory — for example traditions, as shown in the previous paragraph — the second comprises more inclusively the “amorphous mass” of dormant memories that form the background to the functional memory and serve as a pool for new configurations of the latter — for example in the interpretation of a specific site of memory. It thereby integrates “forgetting” (*das Vergessen*) as a highly selective process, and explains the binding of selected memories to carriers — for example sites of memory and their function as agents of sense and identity. According to her argument, functional memory is “functional” in that it serves a certain purpose in the present moment of its construction for the individual as well as the collective memory — that is, it provides sense for the formation of a specific identity among its target group (Assmann 2010: 130–136). This function extends to purposes of legitimation,

delegitimation, and distinction, and in this regard is also highly political and malleable by power. Typical references are again to (religious) rituals, festivals, and national movements (Assmann 2010: 138f).

On the basis of the concept of cultural memory and with a specific focus on the aspect of sites of memory, this article will now examine the efforts of Chǒngjo to construct a specific collective memory of his father. Analyzing the chain of events that culminated in the eight-day-long visit to his father's tomb as well as in the construction of a new fortress, it will be shown how Chǒngjo strived to create an adequate memory for Sado, as father to the king. This memory served two purposes: first, the provision of sense and thereby identity for the group Chǒngjo aimed at, which basically included everybody regardless of social or political hierarchy and which eventually would secure his legitimacy; and, second, the achievement of private satisfaction with the collective, public memory of his father.

## Memory of a father, memory of a king

### The death of a crown prince<sup>13</sup>

King Yǒngjo, full of joy about the eventual birth of an heir on February 13, 1735, elevated his son at the unusual young age of only 14 months old to the status of Crown Prince in 1736. Sado passed through the capping ceremony at only eight years old in 1743, became married to Hyegyǒng in 1744, and was named regent in 1749. All steps of his development were closely watched by the court's public, and records say that he was an exceptional child in every regard — one widely praised by officials (Kim Haboush 1988: 169–172). Yǒngjo himself was the most hopeful yet critical observer of his son.

In her extensive studies Jahyun Kim Haboush has revealed how Yǒngjo's kingship was affected by a number of unfavorable circumstances: the policies of his two predecessors, his father Sukchong (1661–1720, r. 1674–1729) and his brother Kyǒngjong (1688–1724, r. 1720–1724); fierce factional fighting among the aristocratic (*yangban*) scholar-official elite; his personal background as the son of a concubine; and, the circumstances of his own rule — meaning the untimely death of Kyǒngjong under suspicious circumstances. From the moment of his enthronement Yǒngjo therefore aspired to what Kim Haboush (1988: especially chapters 1 and 2) termed “Confucian kingship,” with the unconditional authority of morale rule by following the neo-Confucian ideal of pursuing sagehood and scrupulously adhering to respective rituals and details.

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13 The death of Sado and the context surrounding it have been widely studied in Korean as well as Western historical studies, and in Korean Studies. This article will give a short summary of the events to provide the basic background for the uninformed reader. For further reading, please refer to Kim Haboush (1988, 1996).



From early on, Yǒngjo translated these ideals into expectations of his son and consequently into the style of Sado's upbringing. He was transferred into the palace of the crown prince as soon as he obtained that role, separated from his parents, and placed under the authority of a number of palace women. His parents only visited him very rarely, and specifically his father only in the form of official visits — particularly after his capping. These meetings soon turned into tests, with Yǒngjo questioning his son about the contents of the Confucian classics and interpretations thereof. The dawning alienation of father and son became even more severe with the proclamation of Sado as regent. Instead of regarding it as a form of apprenticeship, Yǒngjo out of personal as well as political necessity soon assigned tasks to his son that he did not seem fit to fulfill at his tender age, especially not according to the king's high expectations — which, on top, were all too often either unarticulated or inadequately communicated. This led to mutual frustration, and to fierce criticism of Sado's gradually deepening insecurity and declining public performance — presumably out of terror of his father.<sup>14</sup>

The fact that Sado seemed to have suffered from a mental disorder added to the problem that the crown prince was not able to grasp his father's intentions and meet his expectations. According to the memoirs of Hyegyǒng, this had been known since Sado's childhood but gradually became more severe from the early 1750s onward (Kim Haboush 1996: 265). For Yǒngjo this became pertinent when Sado in 1757 began to occasionally kill his servants out of frustration and rage. For instance, he had developed what his wife called a "clothing phobia." It led to an obsession with changing his clothes numerous times a day or even before leaving his chambers, to the extent that he had to change them over and over again as soon as he discovered only the slightest flaw or endured the smallest of discomforts. In anger he killed at least one of the ladies-in-waiting who helped him dress; from that moment on, not only his servants but also his wife were in terror of his out-of-control behavior.

For the king, however, this had severe consequences in regard to Sado being his sole heir. Without going too deep into the details that led to the final decision of the king to commit Sado to die in a wooden rice chest on July 12, 1762, after eight days of confinement, the summary of it reads as follows.<sup>15</sup> After rumors of Sado planning regicide reached the king, the son eventually seemed no longer a sustainable heir to the throne. However, it was not feasible for Yǒngjo to just retract the regency. A member of the royal house could also not be physically punished. Thus the person had to drink a cup of poison. This in turn implied criminality, which would have led to additional punishment of the criminal's whole family. Collective punishment, however, would have led to the death of Sado's 11-year-old son, the next royal heir, and consequently to the end of the direct royal line of succession. Even if his son

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14 The literature suggests that Yǒngjo did feel for his son as a father, but was not able to communicate with him in that role or restricted himself to hoping that Sado out of filial piety would know what he wanted and felt.

15 For a comprehensive analysis, please refer to Kim Haboush (1988).

would have lived, he would then be the son of a criminal and thereby not be able to ascend to the throne.

Yǒngjo eventually solved the dilemma by commanding Sado to voluntarily enter a rice chest so that he could die without becoming judged as a criminal and so would not endanger the royal legitimacy. Sado's son was then adopted to Sado's elder half-brother, Crown Prince Hyojang (1719-1728) who had died early. This seems to have been a safety net in case Sado — and therewith his family line — was later questioned.

### King Chǒngjo and his grand project

Already before he ascended the throne, Chǒngjo made a very much unparalleled request to Yǒngjo in 1775 to have certain passages deleted from the official records — most likely compromising material on Sado both as a person and crown prince. Yǒngjo agreed to this, and accordingly the existing records are incomplete (Kim Haboush 1988: 168). The construction of the memory of Sado by his son thus already had begun before Chǒngjo ascended the throne, but only as king was he able to pursue his aim with full authority. When he ascended the throne in 1776 he proclaimed in one of his first statements what would become the overarching theme of his reign, as quoted in the preface of the *Veritable Records of King Chǒngjo* (*Chǒngjo sillok*):

“I am the grandson of the great King Yǒngjong, I am the son of Crown Prince Changhǒn, my mother is her, Lady Hyebin Hong. By order of [King] Yǒngjong I became the son of the great King Chinjong and Queen Hyosun Lady Cho.”

“[...] 英宗大王之孫，莊獻世子之子，母惠嬪洪氏。英宗命爲 眞宗大王之子，母妃孝純王后 趙氏” (*Chǒngjo sillok*: overall preface)<sup>16</sup>

Although he never had his lineage transferal reversed, Chǒngjo explicitly made clear that in his view he was as much the son of his biological father Sado as he was of his legal, official one.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, in one of his very first decisions, he began to elevate Sado's position by bestowing upon him a new posthumous name (*chonho*), and changing that of his shrine too.<sup>18</sup>

“[The king] elevated the posthumous name of Crown Prince Sado and called him Changhǒn, [he] bestowed [a new name] to [his tomb] Suǔnmyo and called it Yǒnguwǒn, and the shrine [Suǔnmyo] was called Kyǒngmogung.”

„追上思悼世子尊號曰莊獻，封垂恩墓曰永祐園，廟曰景慕宮 [...]” (*Chǒngjo sillok*: year of enthronement, 3rd month, 20th day, 1st entry).

<sup>16</sup> Where not stated otherwise, translations are made by the author himself.

<sup>17</sup> For the remainder of the text I will refer to Sado as Changhǒn, except for cases when the name Sado is specifically appropriate.

<sup>18</sup> “Shrine” refers not only to the main building that hosted the ancestral tablet but also to the whole site/compound, consisting of several buildings and being surrounded by a wall.

These changes to the original names assigned new meaning to his father as well as to the tomb and shrine. Sado had been reinstated as crown prince by Yǒngjo and given the posthumous name (*siho* 諡號) that Kim Haboush translates as “Mournful Thoughts” (Sado 思悼).<sup>19</sup> Yǒngjo also decided on the names of the tomb and the shrine of his son. Chǒngjo in reference to his father amended his posthumous name under a new term.

While *siho* could be used for posthumous names of a prince or princess as well as for the highest-level officials and meritorious subjects, *chonho* 尊號 only referred to kings and queens and their nuclear family. Furthermore, the term *wǒn* 園 was used in reference to the tomb of the paternal father of the king, as was *kung* 宮 for the shrine housing his ancestral tablet (Jung and Han 2013).<sup>20</sup> Here, the shrine site was not only renamed but also rebuilt in a style suitable to the new terminology and status. Furthermore, the shrine was situated just to the east outside the main palace; Chǒngjo visited it once a month and created the wooden signboard with the shrine’s name, “Shining Admiration” (Kyǒngmogung 景慕宮) (Shin 2017: 279), himself.<sup>21</sup>

A great number of high-level offices as well as residences of important *yangban* families were located in the same central area of the capital, which meant that changes were very visible to the highest echelons of Chosǒn society. However, now Changhǒn — meaning “Courageous Sage” — did not receive the title of *cho* 祖 or *chong* 宗, which were reserved only for former kings. In this sense it becomes obvious how Chǒngjo while elevating the status of his biological father and in consequence also the respective ancestral rites at the same time too maintained his obligations in Confucian filial piety to his adopted father. He bestowed on him the posthumous name Chinjong one day before he renamed his biological father, in accordance with Yǒngjo’s wishes (Han 2005: 360ff).<sup>22</sup> Additionally, although Changhǒn technically was not his father anymore, Chǒngjo ordered the Office for the Protection of Tombs (Subonggwan 守奉官) to care for the tomb, the office that was in charge of those exclusively of the royal family.<sup>23</sup>

According to custom, everything the king did and said was recorded by historians, who accompanied him at every turn and on all occasions. Thus Chǒngjo could be certain that all of his decisions, arguments, quasi-private musings, as well as actions were written down, put into the diverse archives, and preserved. However, one genre

19 *Yǒngjo sillok*: 38th year, 5th month, 21st day, 2nd entry.

20 This custom was called the “*kungwǒn* system” (*kungwǒnje* 宮園制), being enforced by Yǒngjo. Kings and queens were buried in tombs termed *nǔngmyo* (陵墓), while the ancestral tablet was kept in the royal shrine Chongmyo (宗廟). Further members of the royal family were buried in tombs referred to as *myo* (墓), while the shrine for their ancestral tablets was termed *myo* (廟) (Shin 2017: 277f).

21 Numerous entries in the *Veritable Records* read: “[The king] went to the Kyǒngmo shrine to pay his respects.” See for example *Chǒngjo sillok*: 6th year, 3rd month, 22nd day, 1st entry.

22 *Chǒngjo sillok*: year of enthronement, 3rd month, 20th day, 1st entry.

23 *Chǒngjo sillok*: year of enthronement, 3rd month, 19th day, 6th entry.

stood out from this abundance of official recordings: that of *üigwe*. These records were more than just the mere documentation of court events. *Üigwe* were only published for a very limited range of events and rituals that were all directly related to royal legitimation, for example royal weddings, funerals, or the production of the *sillok*. While they saw the meticulous documentation of all important information on these rituals, in order to be used as models for future generations, their creation itself was a central part of these legitimation rituals. Being the only official documentary genre including graphic depictions and pictures next to text, their production was not only time-consuming but also very expensive. Furthermore, they were produced immediately after the respective events and from time to time presented as presents to meritorious officials.<sup>24</sup>

A number of *üigwe* document the events of the year 1776. The “*Üigwe* of the office for the elevation of the posthumous name and the bestowment of the tomb title *wön* to Crown Prince Changhön” (*Changhön seja sangsi pongwön togam üigwe*), published in 1776, and the “*Üigwe* of the office for the posthumous proclamation of King Chinjong” (*Chinjong ch’usung togam üigwe*), published in 1777, contain information on the context and processes of the naming of Chinjong, Chöngjo’s adopted father, and of Crown Prince Changhön. The “*Üigwe* of the office for the renovation of the Kyöngmo shrine” (*Kyöngmogung kaegön togam üigwe*) records the information on all aspects of the transformation of the shrine into a building more suitable to the biological father of a king. It particularly provides a map of the shrine site, showing its different buildings together with a description of their names and sizes. Finally, the “*Üigwe* of the office for the construction of musical instruments for the Kyöngmo shrine” (*Kyöngmogung akki chosöngch’öng üigwe*) records the making of new musical instruments, as well as of utensils and garments that were used for the diverse rituals that had to be performed as part of the various steps to elevate the position of Changhön (Han 2005: 365ff). These actions and records represented the first distinct steps in the reorganization of the memory of Crown Prince Changhön within the official realm. The amendment of names, the consequent elevation of status of both the historical figure as well as the related sites, and the recording in the *üigwe* genre as canonized knowledge imprinted a specific meaning on the crown prince and his legacy that conform closely to our understanding of sites of memory.<sup>25</sup>

The next major step in Chöngjo’s project would follow in 1784, with the publication of the “*Üigwe* of the Kyöngmo shrine” (*Kyöngmogung üigwe*). This *üigwe* comprised records of all construction activities, the reorganization of artefacts

24 These characteristics distinguish *üigwe* for example from the *sillok*, which are the official annals of a given reign and were only produced by the respective successors. However the documents underlying the *üigwe* were destroyed after their publication, as was also habit for the *sillok* (Vermeersch 2019: 214ff).

25 How and to what degree books were held in high esteem by the Chosön state, individuals, and also commerce has been most convincingly analyzed by Boudewijn Walraven in terms of “a cult of the book” (2007).

contained in the shrine, as well as of the rituals conducted from 1776 onward in regard to the enhancement of Changhön's position. Rather than single publications on each event, this was thus a detailed summary of the past eight years of different ones that were now brought together in comprehensive form — standing as proof of the new status of Changhön. Additionally, the first of the three volumes consists of a wide range of graphical depictions organized into chapters that for example read as follows in the table of contents: “Illustrated descriptions of this whole shrine site” (*pon'gung chön-tosöl* 本宮全圖說); “Illustrated descriptions of the ritual utensils for the reception of the ancestral tablet and the image of the deceased” (*pongan üimul tosöl* 奉安儀物圖說); “Illustrated descriptions of seals and cabinets” (*injang tosöl* 印櫥圖說); “Illustrated descriptions of how to set up food offerings” (*sölch'an tosöl* 設饌圖說); and, “Illustrated descriptions of ritual utensils” (*chegi tosöl* 祭器圖說). These examples already provide a glimpse into the abundance of information that the *üigwe* contain. Not only can we find objects that were used in the rituals performed at the site; the *üigwe* also provide evidence that certain objects were stored and displayed on-site that were not part of traditional Confucian ancestral rites, but in this context had a very different, personal meaning.

Two wooden cabinets with four shelves each were produced for the purpose of displaying these artefacts not in storage but directly in the main hall of the shrine (*chöngdang* 正當), specifically referred to as a “seal cabinet” (*injang* 印櫥) when to the left of the ancestral tablet and as a “book cabinet” (*ch'aekchang* 冊櫥) when to the right thereof. The seal cabinet contained four jade seals: “the seal of the royal crown prince” (*wangseja in* 王世子印), which was used for the proclamation of the crown prince in 1736; “the seal of Crown Prince Sado” (*Sado seja-ji in* 思悼世子之印), which was used by Yöngjo after the death of his son for the respective edict; “the seal of Crown Prince Sado Changhön” (*Sado Changhön seja-ji in* 思悼莊獻世子之印), which was used by Chöngjo when he bestowed upon his father a new posthumous name in 1776; and, “the seal of Sado Changhön, Ribbon-Bound Virtue and Heartfelt Celebration” (*Sado sudök ton'göng Changhön-ji in* 思悼綏德敦慶莊獻世子之印), which was made when Chöngjo bestowed two two-character additional celebratory names on his father on the occasion of the birth of his first son. This was custom for crown princes, however.

The book cabinet on the other side contained writings central to the memory of Changhön. On the first shelf was put the scroll with the edict of the proclamation of the crown prince (*kyomyöngch'uk* 教命軸) from 1736. A wooden storage box for the scroll, decorated with detailed ornamentation of flowers and phoenixes, was set on the second shelf meanwhile. The third shelf contained the so-called bamboo investiture book (*ch'aekbong chukch'aek* 冊封竹冊), customarily made of bamboo slips. According to tradition the king in these books stated the reasons for his decision, and in the end requested the respective person to accept the title offered to him or her. Finally, another decorated wooden box for the investiture book was also

hosted in the cabinet. The *üigwe* further suggests that Chǒngjo added a bamboo-slip book written by himself when he renamed his father “Changhǒn” (*Kyǒngmogung üigwe*: 25–38). All objects were thus intimately entangled with Changhǒn’s life, death, and official memory coined by his son.

The *üigwe* on the original construction of Changhǒn’s tomb and shrine seem, as well as his funeral, to be silent about these objects; so are the *sillok*. Since he had been reinstated after his death, Sado received the funeral of a crown prince — proven not least by the records and the colorful “depictions of the ceremonial order of groups” (*panch’ado* 班次圖) in the *üigwe* (*Sado seja yejang togam üigwe*: 1st book, 217–242). They show the long procession together with all the elements proper for the occasion.

However, nothing can be found in the *sillok* that suggests that Yǒngjo ever visited the shrine again. He seems to have sent his grandson, later King Chǒngjo, from time to time to do so, but avoided going himself (*Yǒngjo sillok*: 41st year, 9th month, 26th day, 1st entry). Chǒngjo — who had witnessed the death of his father as a boy — thus was accustomed to visit the shrine and uphold the memory of his father as well as of events. The objects displayed now, however, were mostly private memory at a public site thereof. The shrine was visible to the public from the outside; it was entered frequently by the king together with his sometimes more, sometimes less in number entourage members — for example officials or relatives, and certainly never completely alone. But entrance to the main hall was restricted only to him. Though its doors were open and the people accompanying him were able to look inside, Chǒngjo might have been the only one overseeing the complete interior of the hall and be able to evoke memories by means of the displayed memorabilia.

The rites and related processions, however, were observable by a wider public. That particularly included officialdom, as owners of political power. Their participation not only in the occasional visits to the shrine but in the whole process of the elevation of Changhǒn made them actors in the construction and continuation of a specific memory. This was even more the case for the opponents of Chǒngjo’s politics of remembrance. While Yǒngjo managed to calm the fierce factionalism within the scholar-official clans, particularly among the *yangban*, two new factions developed over the events of Sado’s death — ones that cut across the old factional frontlines.<sup>26</sup> In general, the so-called Intransigents (*pyǒkp’a* 僻派), mostly members of the Old Doctrine faction, comprised officials who opposed the crown prince and his actions and were sympathetic to the decision of Yǒngjo. On the other hand, the so-called Expedients (*sip’a* 時派), in general members of the Southerners faction, felt

26 In simplified terms, two factions were of importance in that period. The Old Doctrine faction (*noron* 老論), generally strictly conservative, held most of the high offices and had maintained power from the late seventeenth century onward despite Yǒngjo’s policy of impartiality. The Southerners faction (*namin* 南人), relatively progressive, had retreated to the countryside after the lost power struggle and only occupied middle and minor positions in the bureaucracy. For a more detailed account, see for example Setton (1992).

sympathetic toward the crown prince, opposed the decision of the king, and mostly came from the *namin* faction.<sup>27</sup> They first were mentioned under these denominations in two memorials of 1788, just after Chǒngjo nominated one official from each of the major factions to make up the three state councilors.<sup>28</sup> The factions' exact composition, however, is still under discussion, and it seems that membership was fluid and changed over time. In Chǒngjo's striving to amend the power structures in favor of his chosen policies, 1788 was a crucial year for his attempts to ameliorate the accompanying factional strife (Kim Paek-chol 2019).

The notorious factionalism was reason not only for concern regarding punishment of the Intransigents by Chǒngjo upon accession to the throne but also the basis for criticism of his politics vis-à-vis the memory of Changhōn. They already had argued against his status as crown prince just in the way Yǒngjo had envisaged. However Chǒngjo punished only very few of his critics, even though he was forced to strip some of them of their titles posthumously or send them into exile regardless of factional affiliation.

One of the most prominent cases might have been the punishment of Hong Inhan 洪麟漢 (1722–1776), the brother of his maternal grandfather Hong Ponghan 洪鳳漢 (1773–1778). While the Hong family positioned itself as supporter of Sado, only Hong Inhan took the side of the Intransigents. Nevertheless, he held the highest offices until Yǒngjo declared his grandson crown prince in 1775. Upon his critique of the decision and the legitimacy of the crown prince, Hong Inhan was expelled from office in the same year, exiled, and later put to death in 1776 after Chǒngjo's ascension to the throne (Cho 2009; *Yǒngjo sillok*, 51st year, 11th month, 20th day (1775), 1st entry; *Yǒngjo sillok*, 51st year, 12th month, 6th day (1775), 3rd entry).

However, Chǒngjo's decisions did not lead to massive bloodshed — as had been the case so often before. To the contrary, he kept many of the critical officials in office and did not favor the Expedients — that is, he tried to continue and even extend his grandfather's policy of impartiality (*t'angp'yǒng* 蕩平) (Lovins 2019: 27f). But this did not lead to the disappearance of opposition. The famous “Joint Memorial of the Scholars of Kyōngsang Province” might suffice at this point as an example (*Chǒngjo sillok*, 16th year, 4th month, 27rd day (1792), 5th entry). It was an answer to an earlier memorial by Yu Songhan 柳星漢 (1750–1794), an official of the censorate belonging to the Northerners faction. His memorial was formulated as advice on the shortcomings of Chǒngjo's studies, but was understood by a great number of scholars as disguised defamation and an accusation of amoral conduct in not following the examples of the Confucian principles represented by the ancient sages

27 The terms “Intransigents” and “Expedients” are taken from Lovins (2019).

28 On the nomination, see: *Chǒngjo sillok*, 12th year, 2nd month, 11th day (1788), 5th entry. On the first appearance of the denominations *sip'a* and *pyokp'a*, see: *Chǒngjo sillok*, 12th year, 4th month, 23rd day (1788), 2nd entry.

Yao 堯 and Shun 舜 (*Chǒngjo sillok*, 16th year, 4th month, 18rd day (1792), 3rd entry).

The scholars managed to argue for Chǒngjo as the legitimate heir to Yǒngjo, and the righteousness of his memory of Sado, in light of the Confucian principle of “the mandate of heaven” while positioning themselves as proponents of this policy and at the same time framing Yu Songhan as an amoral traitor. Although they demanded his punishment and possible execution, the king did not abide and let him and his family live (Cho 2009). The memory of Changhǒn thus was not constructed by negotiation. He was remembered officially according to the private memory of Chǒngjo, who wished — but was unable — to elevate him to the same level as his adopted father Chinjong.

If Chǒngjo could not put his “two fathers” on the same level officially, he at least could gradually give Changhǒn increased attention and thereby a greater role in the cultural memory of Chosǒn. The next step in Chǒngjo’s politics of memory consequently was to continue this construction of a collective memory. He had visited his father’s tomb at least once or twice a year since his enthronement (Chung 2015: 370). In 1789, however, Yǒngu tomb became unfit for purpose to Changhǒn according to geomantic criteria. The officials in charge of the evaluation listed four points related to the actual state of the site as being in need of intense renovation down to unfavorable signs:

Your official [Pak Myǒngwǒn (朴明源)], unfamiliar and without knowledge about matters of geomancy, being the same as blindness and deafness, would like to discuss about only what everybody can easily know and see: first, the grass turf is dried up and damaged, second, the [depiction of the] green-blue dragon is broken, third, at the backside supporting structure water is fiercely floating, fourth, the masonry on the back segment is not made worthy of heaven. In this regard, that it does not conform to geomancy, that its respective conditions are incomplete, and that the topographic conditions are corrupt and degrading is what the investigation has revealed. There is one further thing, and yet it is the most sorrowful for your subjects, and that is the existence of even poisonous snakes, they live inside the site and the vicinity, they squirm and writhe in large groups, even in the T-shaped shrine building and in the brickwork they spread into every crack, alas.

臣素昧堪輿，便同聾瞽，只以人人易知易見者論之。一，莎草枯損也。二，青龍穿鑿也。三，後托水勢之衝激也。四，後節築石之非天作也。以此觀之，則風氣之不順，土性之不全，地勢之污下，推可知也。有一於此，尚爲臣民之至慟，而況蛇虺之屬，局內近處，蟠結成群，至於丁字閣瓦子，張張罅缺。  
(*Chǒngjo sillok*: 13th year, 7th month, 11th day, 1st entry)

Consequently, the king decided to relocate the tomb from Mount Paebong in the north of modern Seoul to Mount Hwa south of the capital near the village of Suwǒn, a more favorable site. For this purpose the village even had to be relocated to a mountain further north of its original location on Mount Hwa, called Mount P’aldal (*Chǒngjo sillok*: 13th year, 7th month, 15th day, 1st entry). Taking this opportunity,



the tomb was renamed the “Royal Tomb of Clear Magnificence” (Hyölllyungwôn 顯隆園). This relocation was nothing particularly unfamiliar, and entailed a great number of related events that were regulated in detail within the state rituals (Lee 2013: 87ff). It was meticulously documented in three different *ŭigwe* comprising ten books, indicating its importance: “*Ŭigwe* of the office for the relocation of Yōngu tomb” (*Yōnguwōn ch’ōnbong togam*); “*Ŭigwe* of the office for the site of Hyölllyung tomb” (*Hyölllyungwōn wōnso togam ŭigwe*); and, “*Ŭigwe* for the relocation to Hyölllyung tomb” (*Hyölllyungwōn ch’ōnwōn ŭigwe*).

In contrast to the former events, the relocation was far more visible to a broader public beyond the confinements of the palace and the aristocratic officialdom. These still were the people most involved in the process but, unlike before, the relocation of the tomb needed more resources, spread to several locations outside the capital, and involved a greater number of people — for example local craftsmen who had to construct the new buildings and surroundings. Furthermore, the king frequently travelled to both locations to conduct the necessary rituals but also to observe the work in general. These travels made him far more visible to the common people than before. This must have been especially true for the factual relocation, since he travelled from the old to the new site together with the whole procession that carried the remains and artefacts with them; it took him altogether ten days.<sup>29</sup>

### Eight-day festival and Hwasōng fortress

After the relocation of his father’s tomb to a more favorable location, the events most memorable for officials, aristocrats, and commoners alike followed in 1795. On the occasion of the 60th birthdays of both his father and his mother in the same year, together with the 20th anniversary of his own enthronement, Chōngjo visited the new Hyölllyung tomb together with the latter. This was the eight days of festivities — including the two-day-long procession from Seoul to Suwōn — occurring within Hwasōng fortress. The likewise new fortress that was just in the middle of its construction represents the second of these two parts that can be regarded as the culmination of Chōngjo’s project.

This was the first visit for Hyegyōng after the relocation, whereas Chōngjo had the habit of yearly visits that in general took him about two days to complete (Kim Kyoon-Tai 2008b: 54). This particular one, however, was to be combined with a series of additional events for both his entourage — consisting of more than 1,600 people, ranging from members of the royal family to civil and military officials, soldiers, musicians, and all sorts of servants — as well as for the common and lowborn people along the way, in Suwōn, and in the vicinity. A special temporary planning office had therefore been installed about one year before the actual event, being well-funded and staffed by several high-ranking officials.

29 For a more detailed account of the transfer from Yōngu tomb to Hyölllyung tomb, see Lee (2013: 103–106).

Alongside the visit to the tomb, where a number of ancestral rites were performed by the king and his mother, other carefully orchestrated events took place in the temporary palace too. According to the schedule provided in the records, Chǒngjo on the day of his arrival in Suwǒn visited the Confucius temple, inspected the royal special military unit that he had created only in 1793 called the “Robust and Brave Garrison” (*changyongyǒng* 壯勇營), and held special examinations for civil and military posts (*pyǒlsi* 別試). On the fourth day, he visited Hyǒllyung tomb together with his mother and held military maneuvers at the fortress. The same day saw birthday festivities for Hyegyǒng; a great number of the illustrated descriptions in the *ũigwe* are devoted to this special occasion.

The event itself, together with all preparations, are documented in the “*Ŭigwe* for the organization of the procession to the royal tomb in the year *ũlmyo*” (*Wǒnhaeng ũlmyo chǒngni ũigwe*). The parallels to the events around his father’s death are fairly obvious. His eight days of suffering in the rice chest are represented by the eight days of the whole festival, turning suffering into triumph. Additionally, the *ũigwe* is comprised of eight books, the first of which contains 49 pages of *tosǒl* 圖說 together with 63 pages of *panch’ado*. Although it is only printed in black ink without color, it is regarded as one of the most magnificent of the existing *ũigwe*. It was the first of its kind printed with movable metal types specifically cast for this occasion. It was printed in great numbers, the exact quantity of which unfortunately is unknown, and distributed to officials who participated in the events (Han 2005: 432f). It can therefore be regarded as one of the most important written mediums encapsulating the memory of Changhǒn.

The *ũigwe* as a medium of memory was aimed at the higher stratum of society, and the scholar-officials were fully aware of the ideological meaning behind the festivities. However some of the events also reached a broader range of people, intentionally including not only high-ranking officials but also commoners and the lower social classes, and furthermore contributed to the development of a specific memory of the proceedings. This was first of all due to the overall scope of the eight-day event. All participants, together with their 800 horses and several palanquins carried by great numbers of servants, moved slowly along the road in a long, colorful line, while musicians played their instruments and the soldiers surely shouted commands every now and then.

According to the records, numerous people were watching the king and his entourage moving by, cheering and waving along the roadside. This becomes most vivid in the pictures in the *ũigwe*, as well as in the famous eight-panel folding screen that depicts eight central scenes of the complete event.<sup>30</sup> Generally, crowds of spectators — many of whom he had chats and talks with — were a common scene during

30 Unfortunately, the author was not able to obtain the copyright for showing the screen in this article. It is designated as National Treasure No. 1430 and presented online by the Cultural Heritage Administration: <http://english.cha.go.kr>.

Chǒngjo's frequent travels, information on which seems to have spread rapidly among the people (Yi Tae-jin 2007: 210f). Around noon on the first day, the procession had to cross the River Han. For this purpose a pontoon bridge had been built shortly before, which is supposed to have been the first and maybe only one of its kind of that length hitherto, and so it must have attracted many curious onlookers (Han 2005: 411).<sup>31</sup>

While most of the ancestral rites, further rituals, and festivities were only accessible to selected participants, the procession to the fortress as well as those journeys from the fortress to the tomb some kilometers to the south of it were visible to the general public. A specific event that took up the whole of the sixth day broke with rigid boundaries and reached out to the people: "the feeding of the poor," and general feasts for the population of Suwǒn besides. The king distributed rice, the main currency of the time, and other staples to almost 5,000 poor people together with additional porridge for the starving — with whom he shared a meal. According to the chapter "Participation in banquets with the elderly" (*ch'amyǒn noin* 參宴老人) in the *ũigwe*, the king also met with several groups of elderly people from nearby, being in their 60s to 80s and altogether 384 people. He provided them with rice and alcohol, took meals with them, and held discussions (*Wǒnhaeng ũlmyo chǒngni ũigwe*: book 5).

These charitable acts for the elderly and the poor did not stop with the end of the event. As Kim Moonsik (Kim Moonsik 2008b: 66–69) points out, after the court returned to the capital the surplus of the planning office's budget was mostly handed down to the provinces and the peasants for seeds and food. While this was not uncommon in general, it was a particular practice for the king's visits to the tombs of his direct ancestors and former kings. However, Changhǒn was neither of those. Given the otherwise strict observance of the ritual canon, Chǒngjo in this way communicated his message and constructed a memory of him as a son of a king — and consequently also a new memory of his biological father. The scholar-officials were aware of these nuances in the ritual code, whereas the general public might just have accepted and welcomed it as Chǒngjo's established "politics by consensus between king and people" (Kim and Macrae 2019: 302).

Eventually, the construction of Hwasǒng fortress between 1794 and 1796 is the second part of the culmination of Chǒngjo's project for the remembrance of his father. It was built on the site of Suwǒn, and the village was integrated within the structure's walls. The temporary palace that hosted the court for the 60th birthday events of Chǒngjo's parents was built at the same time. The construction of the fortress can be regarded as singularly special in regard to diverse matters, describing which would exceed the scope of this article however.<sup>32</sup> As for Hwasǒng fortress

31 Only two entries from the time of King Sejong (1397–1450, r. 1418–1450) speak of a "pontoon bridge" (*chugyo* 舟橋) in a report on things worth applying by the envoy Pak Sesaeng 朴瑞生, who had recently been to Japan.

32 For a more detailed account, please refer to Choi Hong-kyu (2002) or Pölking (2017).

being part of the culture of memory, as recorded in the “*Ŭigwe* for the construction of Hwasŏng fortress” (*Hwasŏng sŏngyŏk ŭigwe*), two aspects shall suffice to support the article’s argument.

First, the planning and construction of the fortress were unique in that the king integrated therein traditional knowledge concerning building such a structure, improvements in design that were discussed after the Japanese invasions in the late sixteenth century, and, most strikingly, foreign ideas based on Western knowledge imported from China. This deviation from reliance on traditional knowledge alone is worth mentioning for two reasons. On the one side, it had a profound impact on the strict adherence to tradition — meaning the Confucian ideological framework. The latter had already been brought under scrutiny by Chŏngjo’s political approach of impartiality, which also included the installation of the royal library Kyujanggak 奎章閣 and the integration of progressive officials who were open-minded about change — some to the extent of supporting reform and new knowledge in their attempt to overcome the shortcomings and backwardness of Korean society and politics.<sup>33</sup>

To this end they proposed an alternative reading of the Confucian classics that allowed them to posit reforms and to accept ideas from China — at the time regarded as being ruled by barbarians, namely the Manchu.<sup>34</sup> The integration not only of new knowledge but also of new actors from the Southerners faction strengthened support for the king’s project, and thereby his reading of his father’s life history. This became vividly clear in the joint memorial of scholars from the Southerners faction in 1792. Signed by more than 10,000 scholars, it ultimately supported Chŏngjo in his policy, giving him leverage and power to stretch the ideological limits of his kingship (Cho 2009).

Second, the application of new ideas was concretely visible in the architecture of Hwasŏng fortress — as can be seen in the very detailed *tosŏl* found in the *ŭigwe*. The fortress walls were made of brick instead of the customary stone. Brick construction was not unknown to Korea, but had never been used to this degree before. The idea to use bricks for fortress walls came from China, and was promoted by *sirhak* scholars — some of whom were very close to Chŏngjo, to the extent of being personal friends. Thus the lower parts of the walls generally were made from stone while the upper ones were made from bricks, thereby combining the two building techniques. Furthermore, new types of cranes and pulleys were constructed that were hitherto unknown to Korea and originated from Chinese sources. Manuals for their construction and usage were included in the *ŭigwe*, and they must have been something to marvel at for citizens and the craftsmen involved — who were called to the construction site from all over the country.

33 For a condensed overview on the Kyujanggak, please refer to Yi Tae-jin (2007: 212–219).

34 These scholars’ approach to Confucian ideology is known as “practical learning” (*sirhak* 實學), a term attributed to it only in the twentieth century. For a closer reading, see Kalton (1975) or Pak (2019).

The construction was essentially finished after two and a half years instead of the predicted ten. Although the exact reasons for that are not ultimately clear, it is obvious that the construction itself must have been of enormous size and of an intensity previously unknown (Kim Kyoong-Tai 2008a: 142ff). Furthermore huge festivities (*naksöngyöng* 落成宴) marked the end of the construction phase, ones including both officials as well as the general population. They were not only able to take part in the feast but were also entertained with music and dance. But especially the night drills of the military units who were training torch signs and doing other practices with torches, lanterns, and fireworks must have been a spectacular sight to behold. The *üigwe* only give brief textual accounts of the different practices and of the officials who reported on them to the king:

“Regarding the practices with torches, the minister for military affairs kneeled [before the king] and began to make his report.”

”演炬兵曹判書跪啓稟演炬。” (*Hwasöng söngyök üigwe*: 2nd book, sub-chapter ”Ways of military training“ (*chosik* 操式)).

The king, however, seems to have been very pleased not only with the drills and the respective military commanders but also with the population at large, so much so that he exempted them from a burdensome grain tax for a year.

“For this year, the residents inside and outside the fortress shall in regard to the *hyang* tax for the military and the *huan* tax for famine relief especially be exempt from the *mo* grain tax, so that it may assist them in their hopes and good fortunes.”

“[...] 城内外居民當年餉與還特竝除耗以副渠輩望幸之情 [...].” (*Il söngnok*: 21st year (1797), 1st month, 29th day).

While there is no further qualification in the *üigwe*, the illustrations are more revealing.<sup>35</sup> First of all, that of the fortress spans two pages and gives a bird’s-eye view of the whole site together with topographic characteristics and the complete wall — including all towers and gates in detail, not as mere dummies. Furthermore the village of Suwön, more resembling a small city, as well as the palace are depicted in great detail, together with the paddy fields and further scenic features both inside and outside the fortress walls. Soldiers are lined up on the walls holding lit torches in their hands. Even a huge firework display is depicted. In sum, the illustration vividly shows the grandeur of the whole fortress; it gives an almost realistic impression of what the scenery during the practices might have looked like, and what impression it must have made on the common people. One can assume that this must have been a memory that was to last for a long time, deeply imbedded in the individual ones of the people. That memory would also have been connected to both the fortress as the guardian of the city and to the Hyöllung tomb of Changhön, as

35 See *Hwasöng söngyök üigwe*: first book, 185f. The illustration is titled “Practices with torches” (*yön’gö* 演炬).

well as to the occasion of the finishing of its construction — thus being two sites of memory amalgamated into one single point in time and space.

## Findings and Remarks

Whether Chǒngjo from the beginning of his reign had an elaborate plan in mind to form the collective memory of his father by constructing the culture of memory in the way he did is not clear. The article uses the term “project” to communicate the coherent efforts to elevate the status of Sado to that of Chinjong, if not to that of the former king Yǒngjo, in both respects as father and predecessor, and to construct the collective memories of him accordingly. Hyegyǒng and other sources provide us with the information that Chǒngjo had planned to retire to Hwasǒng fortress in 1804 and abdicate to his son, who then would be able to officially exonerate Changhǒn without any alleged bias (Lovins 2019: 117f).<sup>36</sup> However Chǒngjo died in 1800, thus being unable to realize his vision. In this regard, the possibly second-to-last step in our historical retrospect is the construction of Hwasǒng fortress and the eight-day festival in 1795.

Nevertheless, Chǒngjo managed to continuously elevate Sado’s status from the first day of his reign by changing his posthumous name and amending his shrine and tomb too. He then relocated the latter to a more favorable site, again giving it an even more honorary title. On the occasion of the 60th birthdays of his parents, Chǒngjo organized the most splendid procession in Chosǒn history known to us, certainly to his contemporaries. Eventually, Hwasǒng fortress as the guardian of the city was built — including a palace that was equipped with all the facilities necessary for an actual main palace in a capital.

These steps and the evolving accompanying policies were geared toward specific social and political groups. The *yangban* scholar-officials and other literati obviously were addressed not only by Chǒngjo’s actions but maybe even more so by the records of these events. The efforts of Chǒngjo to extend the limits of Confucian ideology and tradition were visible to them not only in the manifestation through actual sites of memory, but also by the fact that they were invested with specific meaning through the record-keeping and its high esteem in Chosǒn practice. The *ũigwe* are of prominence in this regard, since they represent a medium oscillating between mere documentation and being part of a ritual in themselves. Their often magnificent style, specifically obvious in the *ũigwe* connected to Changhǒn, elevates them above the other, simply textual documents.

Furthermore, the process of their publication — edited directly after the respective event, printed and colorized, always connected to the legitimation of the throne, and often published in many copies that were presented to meritorious subjects — defines them as a medium for the perpetuation of a specific memory of these events

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36 Following Lovins, see also Kim Haboush (1996: 164, 205).

within the Korean culture of printing — that is, the canonizing of knowledge (Vermeersch 2019: 214). This was completely in line with the cult-like status of the book in Korea, either as private or state publication (Walraven 2007: 257ff). They thus provide a fixed point for a collective memory, and thereby for the identity creation of their target group. Such a memory is continuously updated and shared by the individuals involved, and combines ritual (in the legitimation sense) with what Stephan Feuchtwang (2010: 287ff) analyzes as “commemorative rites.” In that, the memory of Changhōn marks a specific historical event — but turns its interpretation from however the fact had been into one that was based on the needs of Chōngjo’s present as the reigning king. Manifested in the objectivations of sites of memory, it becomes history, functional memory, and the focal point for both the present and future.

However, many of the events analyzed above were visible to the public as well. The provision of grain, the meetings of the king with the elderly, the construction of the different sites, the processions (above all the one in 1795), the spectacles and fireworks: all these events were not only mere entertainment but intimately entangled with the commemoration of Changhōn too. This entanglement might not have been very clear to the general public, as most Koreans were illiterate or simply unaware of the historical circumstances behind the events. But they did connect the king with his subjects, and thereby provided him legitimacy; this in turn reflected on the legitimacy of his construction of a specific culture of memory too. Furthermore, Chōngjo was very keen to meet with people outside the palace during his frequent visits to the shrines and tombs of former kings and queens. He was not a distant king unknown to the people, but connected to them and their lives in a way more personal than any of his predecessors had done (Yi Tae-jin 2007: 208–212). The construction of sites of memory of Changhōn and the visibility to his subjects thus was legitimizing of him both personally and professionally.

In examining these events, however, we can see how he achieved the goal of restoring the authority of his father while at the same time staying within the confinements of Confucian filial piety and Chosōn law regarding his obligations to his adopted father. Neither did he bestow upon Changhōn a rank higher than that of Chinjong nor did he elevate the shrine or tomb of the former to the same level as that of the latter. Chōngjo managed to construct the remembrance of his father by means of establishing sites of memory within the Chosōn culture of memory that conveyed the intended meaning, and that in the end seemed to have outweighed the importance of his adopted father.

How can the extent or effect of Chōngjo’s efforts ultimately be measured? While this is also a general question of concern to Memory Studies, one proxy might suffice at this point: diachronic sustainability. It will, however, have to be one analyzed in detail in future research. On the one hand, the memory of Crown Prince Changhōn constructed by Chōngjo lasted until the end of the nineteenth century. Research on the political consequences of Chōngjo’s early death has shown that a great number

of his close friends and officials, most of all members of the Expedients faction, were purged, sent into exile, or sentenced to death when the Intransigents faction seized power.<sup>37</sup>

However nothing of the memory of Changhŏn was reversed herewith, and while the official records of the nineteenth century are silent on him he was regardless even elevated to Emperor in 1899 and his tomb termed “Yungnŭng” 隆陵 — before this type of memory became obsolete in 1910 (Shin 2017: 280). On the other hand, as mentioned at the outset, the memory of Crown Prince Sado emerging in 1776 fell into oblivion over time, and was not to be part of functional Korean collective memory essentially until its revival in modern popular culture. The reenactment of the 1795 procession also fits into this development of creating an official narrative of the advanced Korean politics, society, and culture of the eighteenth century according to the needs of the present.

## Glossary

<i>ch'aekchang</i>	冊檄
<i>changyongyŏng</i>	壯勇營
<i>cho</i>	祖
<i>chong</i>	宗
<i>chŏngdang</i>	正當
Chongmyo	宗廟
<i>chonho</i>	尊號
<i>chugyo</i>	舟橋
Hyŏllyungwŏn	顯隆園
<i>injang</i>	印檄
<i>kung</i>	宮
<i>kungwŏnje</i>	宮園制
Kyŏngmogung	宮
<i>myo</i>	墓
<i>myo</i>	廟
<i>naksŏngyŏng</i>	落成宴
<i>namin</i>	南人
<i>noron</i>	老論
<i>nŭngmyo</i>	陵墓

37 For the political turmoil, persecution of Christians, and the period of child kings dominated by their queen's families, please refer to Baker et al. (2017), particularly to part 1.



<i>panch'ado</i>	班次圖
<i>pyōkp'a</i>	僻派
<i>pyōlsi</i>	別試
<i>siho</i>	諡號
<i>sillok</i>	實錄
<i>sip'a</i>	時派
<i>sirhak</i>	實學
Subonggwan	守奉官
<i>t'ang'pyōng</i>	蕩平
Taehan Cheguk	大韓帝國
<i>tosōl</i>	圖說
<i>ūigwe</i>	儀軌
<i>wōn</i>	園
<i>yangban</i>	兩班

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