The Ordinary Life and Cultural Landscapes of Korea

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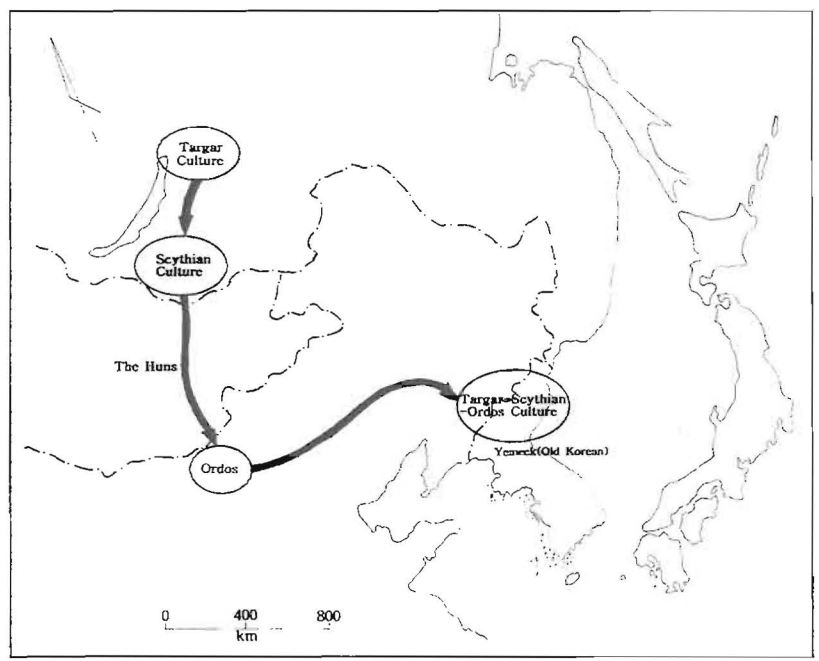
1. The Making of Korean Culture

Pre-modern Korea has had a multitude of historical and cultural strata originated from the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages. Throughout most of its history, the cultural template shaped during these periods has influenced the material and spiritual life of the people living in the Korean Peninsula. It is commonly



▲ Fig. 1-1 Origins of the Korean Cultures

recognized that the cultural paragon of the last two periods became the direct roots of Korean culture. The Neolithic Age saw the in-migration of tribes associated with pastoral and semi-agricultural economies. Proceeding to the next Bronze Age, the Targar culture moved in far from the Lake Bikal region, joining on the way to the Korean Peninsula the Scythian culture of Siberia and the Ordos culture of Tungus. These three motifs combined to shape up the cultural complex of the old Korean called *Yemek*(Fig.1-1).

▲ Fig. 1-2 Korean Shaman

In the Iron Age the ancient Korean society incorporated agriculture as another of its important cultural traits. This was a critical moment, as agriculture became the mainstay of economic and cultural life of Korea during the next thousand years or more. Since the growing of crops is greatly influenced by daily weather conditions and mid-term climate situations, cultivators were at the outset aware of the power and wonder of nature. Not surprisingly every time natural conditions did not go as they hoped or pleased, farmers began to believe that there was the Almighty behind certain inauspicious natural phenomena. For the sake of obtaining a good harvest they offered foods, spirits and music in a ritual

▲ Fig. 1-3 Ritual Service Performed before Moving in a New House

to soothe the Supreme Being. Along with increases in population and the initiation of intensive cultivation, the rituals performed became more complex and the offerings more diverse and colorful.

The belief systems took the shape of animism and shamanism which still influence the subconscious of modern-day Koreans(Fig.1-2). These lingering beliefs are expressed in one form or another in various ceremonies. To give an example, many Koreans still practice the ceremony of appeasing the guardian Gods which is performed just before moving in new houses or breaking grounds for building houses(Fig.1-3). It has been characteristic of the Koreans to believe in multiple Gods that, they think, dwell in mountains, streams, stars, stones, trees, and many other features of nature. Although invisible, deities are also thought to be present in houses in such forms as the grandma goddess taking care of the birth and rearing of infants and the guardian under the girder, the ground spirit, the kitchen god, the god on the platform of jars of seasonings and preserves, and the god of the Big Dipper. They are all thought to bestow longevity, happiness and blessings to the entire family(Fig.1-4).

▲ Fig. 1-4 Abode of a House Guardian Spirit

▲ Fig. 1-5 Stone Flagpole of a Buddhist sect and Temple Pagoda

▲ Fig. 1-6 Relics of Old Buddhist Temple at Mireukri

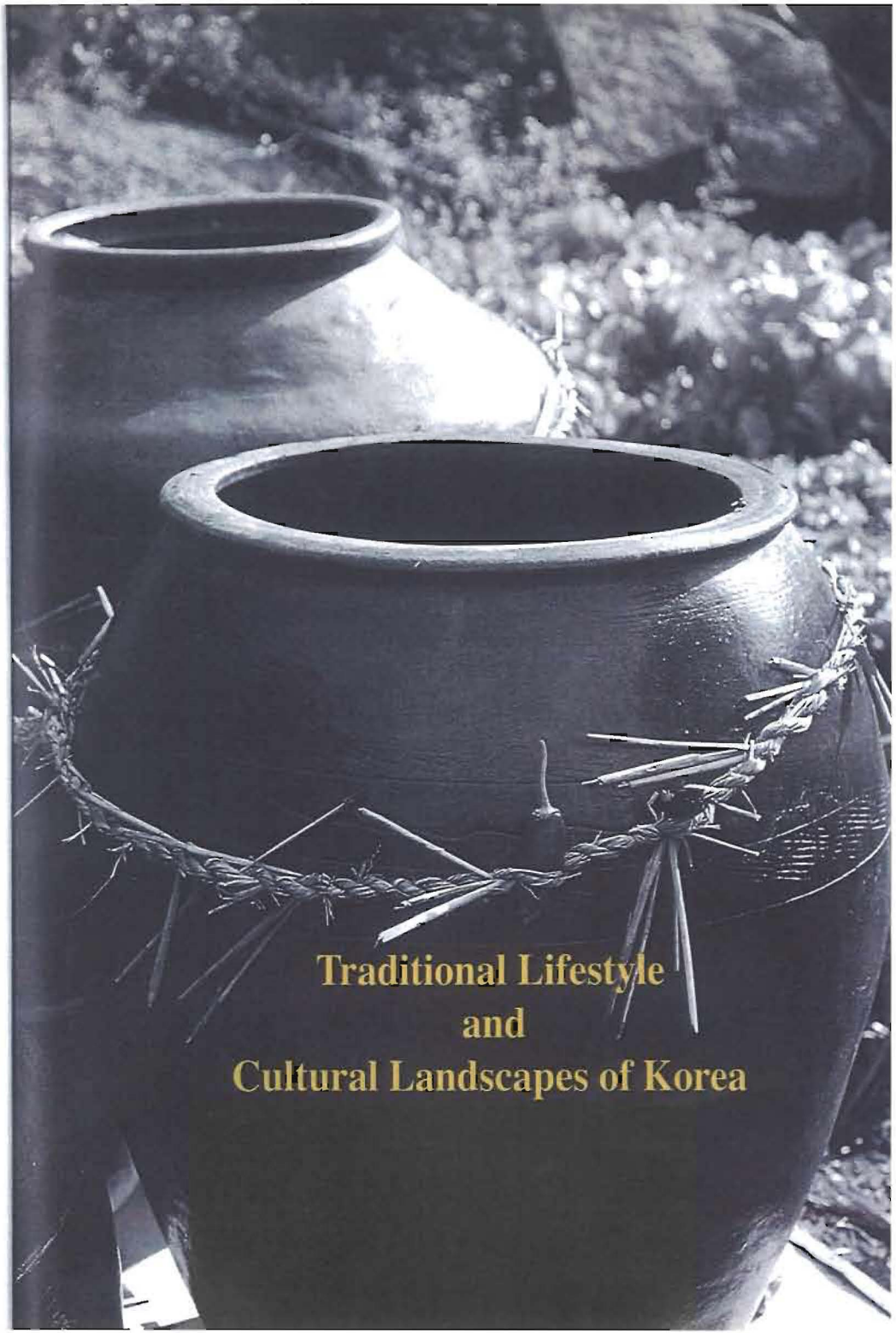
Buddhism, which originated in India and was introduced in Korea by way of China during the Three Kingdoms Period served for a long time as a spiritual guidance for national unity and solidarity. Once instituted, the ideology contributed to the development of arts, academics, and medical technology. Buddhism teaches that the truth is law, justice and virtue all in one. Buddhists believe that everything is nothing. In other words, the whole material world is illusory and all is equal under Buddha. Added to these spiritual teachings were concrete, supplicating and happiness-oriented characteristics which were actually ingrown on the soil of Korea. The encompassing nature of the Buddhist religion made many Koreans turn to Buddhism when they were in trouble from wars, poverty, diseases and other misfortune. In no time, Buddhism as a religious belief system became tightly integrated into the visible landscape of Korea in the form of temples, statues and monuments(Fig.1-5, 6). By consensus these material components constitute integral parts of the Korean cultural landscape. As in other religions, Buddhism expands to include a total of twenty-one minor sections. The mainstream of Korean

▲ Fig. 1-7 Confucian Pavilion

▲ Fig. 1-8 Domestic Ancestral Shrine

Buddhism, however, has been consistently related with Zen. Rather than simply reciting scriptures, the Zen denomination opts to emphasize morality, asceticism and meditation as a way of reaching nirvana. Monks retreat into temples in deep mountains detached from the mundane world to pray and practice Zen.

However significant all the traditions of animism, shamanism and Buddhism, it might be Confucianism that constitutes the single most important component of Korean ideology. Although introduced as early as the Three Kingdoms Period, it was only in Choson Korea that Confucianism replaced Buddhism as the leading guidance for the total way of life of Korean society. As is well known, the New Confucianism succeeding the nascent one of the Ancient Period emphasizes royalty to the court, teacher and father. In other words, its ideological structure is built on a hierarchical order, a male-centered view of the world and nationalism. Criticized by outsiders as a highly discriminative ideology, Confucianism has nonetheless played a critical role in sustaining five thousand years of traditions and to shape the Korean cultural landscape(Fig.1-7, 8).


Traditional Lifestyle
and
Cultural Landscapes of Korea

2. Traditional Lifestyle and Cultural Landscapes of Korea

▲ Fig. 2-1 The Beauty in Traditional Costume

2.1 Clothing, Food and Dwellings in Folk Ways of Life

1) Traditional Garments

Ordinary Koreans had for a long time worn garments made of hemp, ramie and cotton, while the upper classes favored silk over common fabric simply because of "conspicuous consumption." Fashion acted as an index of social, political and economic status. For a while hemp was popular among commoners who span and wove it to make clothing worn at first throughout the year and later only in summer. As a summer mode of fashion hemp clothes were effective in allowing ventilation, thus cooling down the person wearing it. In this way, climate with alternating heat and cold influenced the types of traditional clothing in Korea(Fig.2-1).

Prior to industrialization, hemp and ramie were ideal fabric materials for

▲ Fig. 2-2 Hemp Fabric

▲ Fig. 2-3 Ramie Fabric

△ Fig. 2-4 Silk Store

ordinary people who spent most of their time in the fields under a sultry heat, tilling, weeding, harvesting, threshing and, above all, sweating(Fig.2-2, 3). On account of the climate, the cultivation of ramie was limited mainly to Southern Korea. The fiber crop did well in warm temperature with abundant precipitation. The ramie and hemp fabric were tailored into trousers, shirts, skirts and overcoats, customized in such a way that the wearers felt comfortable. Unlike the commoners, the power elite wore silk in winter(Fig.2-4). Introduced in the Three Kingdoms Period, silk became the conventional mode of winter clothing for the privileged Koreans.

As for the lower classes, cotton transplanted from China was most popular. Precisely speaking it was in the reign of King Kongmin of the Koryo Dynasty(918-1392) that Mr. Moon Ick-Jeom carried cottonseed back to Korea from China. What came along with the seeds were cultivation methods and weaving techniques. Shortly after its introduction, shirts, overcoats, trousers, socks and underwear made of cotton became popular in all walks of life. Particularly these clothes helped people to get through the harsh winter. With the expansion of cotton

△ Fig. 2-5 Hanbok, Korea's Traditional Clothing

cultivation, this textile became the mainstay of the national economy in Chosun Korea(1392-1910). History says that cotton fabric at that time served as currency in kind.

Unlike the plant fibers of hemp, ramie and cotton, silk is drawn from the cocoons of silkworms. It is said that Korea has an appropriate environment for the husbandry of silkworms and the cultivation of mulberry trees. The long history of the silk industry once made Korea a major silkworm producer and a silk exporting country on par with Japan and China. In design, the partition of shirts and trousers might be an important differentiating character of Korean costumes as compared with Chinese and Japanese ones(Fig.2-5).

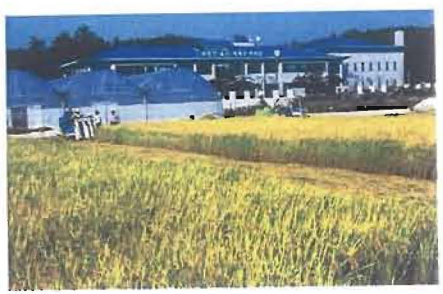
2) Traditional Cuisine

In Koppen's classification, Korea falls into the C group of climate types. Featuring a temperate Asiatic monsoon climate, the country is an ideal place for the cultivation of rice and paddies are a common landscape feature in Korea. With the exception of regions of extreme environment, paddies are everywhere

throughout the peninsula, whether consecutive or disparate(Fig.2-6, 7, 8, 9, 10). As a mainstay of Korean foodstuff, rice is eaten in various forms as boiled rice, soup, cakes and pancakes. In addition to rice, a diversity of miscellaneous crops are produced and consumed in the country including barley, naked barley, fox millet, sorghum, beans, wheat, buck-

▲ Fig. 2-6 Paddy and Rice Cultivation

▲ Fig. 2-7 Planting



▲ Fig. 2-8 Harvesting

▲ Fig. 2-9 Threshing

▲ Fig. 2-10 Thatch Stacks

▲ Fig. 2-11 Naengmyon, Buckwheat Noodle

▲ Fig. 2-12 Bibimbop, Boiled Rice Mixed with Various Side Dishes

wheat, and other numerous grains. Wheat, although limited in production, provides Koreans with ingredients for noodles and cakes. For North Koreans, buckwheat and potatoes are integral materials used to make very special types of noodles called *naengmyon*(Fig.2-11). Other ingredients adding diversity to the menu are vegetables such as radish, Korean cabbage, green onion, cucumber, eggplant, squash and lettuce. Customarily, ordinary Koreans eat rice wrapping it in leafs vegetables or mixing it with seasoned vegetables and various side dishes(Fig.2-12).

Located in a mid-latitude temperate zone with four distinct seasons, Korea features diverse foods for each season. Characteristically, a variety of fermented fares are to be formed on the menu. Representatives of here are soybean paste, chili pepper paste, soy sauce, *kimchi* and fermented seafood. Unlike cheese and yogurt which are produced from milk and which many Westerners eat daily, Korean foods are mostly made of vegetables.

Soybean paste, soy sauce, pepper paste and the nationwide favorite kimchi are known to foreign gourmets as foods with a spicy and distinct flavor(Fig.2-13, 14, 15). Soybean paste and soy sauce are

▲ Fig. 2-13 Soybean Paste

▲ Fig. 2-14 Soy Sauce

▲ Fig. 2-15 Red Pepper Paste

▲ Fig. 2-16 Jars of Soybean Paste

made from beans. The process of making soy sauce involves combining blocks of soybeans with brine to produce the liquid condiment. Like wine in the West, soy sauce is used to add flavor to foods while cooking(Fig.2-16). The condiment itself changes taste in time. The pepper paste introduced in the late Choson Korea has a very hot taste, which is reflected in its dark red tint(Fig.2-17). These three main condiments - soy sauce, soybean paste and red pepper paste - enrich Korean foods in both content and taste. In this way, the sauces increase the flavor of diverse dishes.

The intimate relationship of soybean

△ Fig. 2-17 Pepper in the Field

▲ Fig. 2-18 Golden Cord around a Jar

▲ Fig. 2-19 Ritual Service for the Deity of Jar Platform

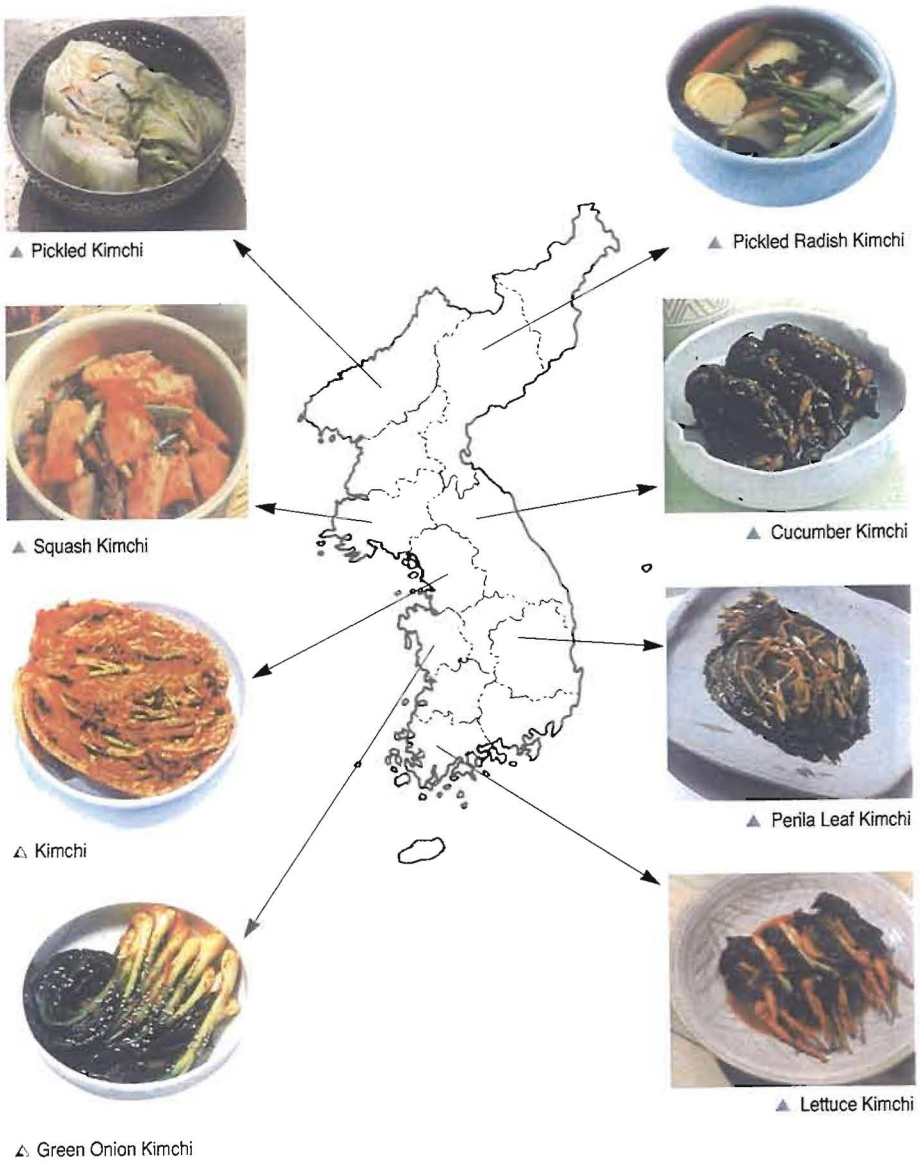
△ Fig. 2-20 Korean Cabbages in the Field

paste, soy sauce and red pepper paste with Korean daily life leads to the making of the jar platform into a sacred space. People hang a golden cord to prohibit vicious spirit from violating this holy space(Fig.2-18). The strong belief that the jar platform is the abode of a deity taking charge of the subsistence of ordinary people corroborates the lingering ideological legacy of animism(Fig.2-19).

That said, the single most important food in Korea has to be kimchi which is served along with rice as a major foodstuff. To make kimchi one mixes Korean cabbage, salt, leek, garlic, ginger, sesame, green onion, fermented seafood solution, and other various ingredients(Fig.2-20, 21, 22). The taste of kimchi slightly differs

▶ Fig. 2-21 Ingredients of Kimchi

▲ Fig. 2-22 Fermented Shrimps



▲ Fig. 2-23 Map of Kimchi by Region

▲ Fig. 2-24 Ginseng Field

▲ Fig. 2-25 Hillside Ginseng Field

according to regions where it is made(Fig.2-23). Precisely speaking it is regional climate that determines the kimchi-making season and the taste of it. As a rule, kimchi is made just before the coming of winter and, for good reason, the time for making it is earlier toward the North. Also, the quantity of salt and pepper added varies from region to region. For instance, a salty and hot kimchi is normal in southern Korea. Because of the hot and humid weather throughout the year, kimchi becomes sour sooner in this region than the northern parts. Salt and pepper help to delay the souring process. The southern region also uses fermented shrimp and anchovy to boost flavor. Even though kimchi was popularized a long time ago, it was not until the 17th century that the hot and spicy kimchi we are accustomed to became a regular item on the menu. It is said that chili pepper was introduced from Japan during the Korea-Japan War in that period.

Equally important in Korean culture might be medicinal herbs. Many Koreans take in herbs expecting healing effects. Among the various medicinal herbs identified with Korea, ginseng has been by far the most widely known(Fig.2-24, 25). In

▲ Fig. 2-26 Medicinal Herb Market at Jeggidong

▲ Fig. 2-27 Medicinal Herb Store

▲ Fig. 2-28 Oriental Medicine Clinic

▲ Fig. 2-29 Traditional Upper Class Housing Complex at Namsan

the past, herbs of medical uses were bought and sold in specialized periodic markets. Some of the prominent ones have survived the test of time still being used solely through their reputation in various place to attract customers from every corner of the country(Fig.2-26, 27, 28).

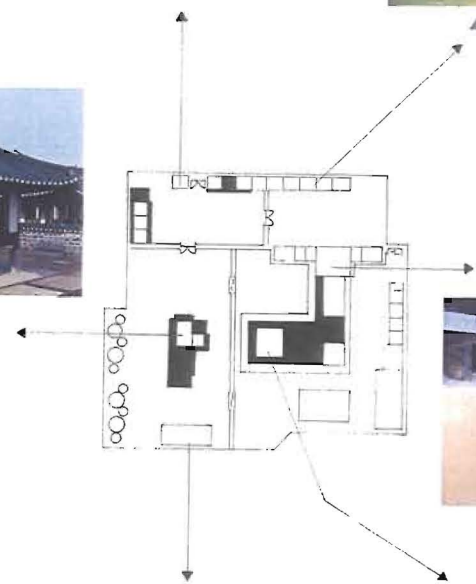
3) Traditional Housing

The types of dwelling vary depending on climate, building materials and social status of the inhabitants. In the pre-modern period, the upper classes lived in spacious tile-roofed houses, and the commoners in thatch-roofed houses built within limited space. Traditional houses were in most cases built of materials easily found in neighboring areas. By social status, the houses were divided into upper-class housing and folk housing. Not surprisingly, the houses for the elite were built on a rather lavish and large scale. The internal space was multi-layered to reflect the social, economic and gender status of the residents(Fig.2-29, 30). Following the construction plan, one enters a main gate to get to the quarters of the lower class residents called *haengrangchae* on the right and left sides of the gate. Further inside a

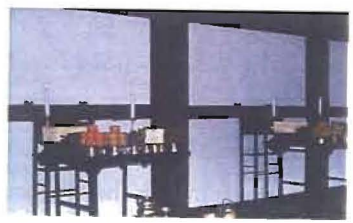
▲ Soseuldaemun, Towering Main Gate

▲ Haengrangchae,
Quarter of Servile People

▲ Sarangchae,
Men's Quarter



▼ Kitchen



▲ Ancestral Shrine

▲ Anchae, Women's Quarter

▲ Fig. 2-30 Structure of Traditional Housing

▲ Fig. 2-31 Korean Garden

sarangchae for male inhabitants will be found. Some high-ranking officers had a garden built adjacent to the males' wing. Imitating the cosmic world on a miniscule scale, gardens represent a condensed expression of Korea's beauty of landscape architecture(Fig.2-31). The *anchae* in the deepest section of the house is the space for females and mistresses. Rigorous Confucian rules were applied to the creation and separation of males' and females' spaces. In this way, upper class housing recapitulates the status and gender division of societies per se. Almost similar in structure to modern architecture, the traditional housing nonetheless has characterizing features of *ondol* hypocausts and commodious wooden floors.

Dwellings take different structures in each climate region. Toward the south, the housing plan gets away from the closed structure of the North to be more open, and whereas the northern housing is structured to adapt to severe winter, the southern one is fashioned in consideration of the hot summer. The folk housing in the North has a '田'-shaped structure with each space functionally divided into a bedroom, a kitchen and a stable. Housing in the Central Region has a spacious

△ Fig. 2-32 Ondol Hypocaust

△ Fig. 2-33 Wooden Floor

wooden floor in the center and side wings protruded from the floor to form 'ㄱ', 'ㄴ' or 'ㅁ' shapes in basic plan. Southern housing has an open structure of '_' shape.

A duality exists in the characteristics of Korean traditional housing, as it is built so as to be well adapted to both cold and heat. *Ondol* has been the traditional heating system in pan-Korean houses with origins that can be traced to the Three Kingdoms Period(Fig.2-32). Compared with the furnaces of the West, the hypocaust is much more effective in heating the room and in maintaining the warmth for an extended period of time. The heating system is set in motion with the convection of warm air from the heated stone floor. As is well known, rock as a mineral substance becomes warm and cool sooner than water, and because of this characteristic, *ondol* without the addition of heat turns into a cool place to spend during the summer. In the sub-Central Region, a wooden floor provides space for work, rest and having meals in summer(Fig.2-33). Cool and fresh air flows back and forth underneath the wooden floor before slipping out of the gap to make the entire space pleasant to stay.

▲ Fig.2-34 Thatch-Roofed Housing

▲ Fig.2-35 Building Material of Trditional Housing

A typical folk housing consists of three compartments(Fig.2-34, 35). The humble house has a kitchen in the center, a *sarangbang*(male's room) on the right and an *anbang*(female's room) on the left, or vice versa. For those having kitchens in the end of the left or right side, the women's room is laid in the middle of the kitchen and the male's room. With these basic spaces, the thatch-roofed three-compartment houses are likely to be devoid of wooden floors. Only in case the kitchen has extra space, an earthen floor is set up to play the same function as is expected from wooden floors. For the indigent, however, it is shelter rather than the floors that matters most. Walls of stone or mud surrounding the thatch-roofed houses serve as property boundaries.

2.2 Religious Landscapes and Ordinary Life

1) Buddhism in the Korean Landscapes

▲ Fig. 2-36 Festival on Buddha's Birthday

▲ Fig. 2-37 Shinreuksa Temple on a Buddhist Holiday

During the three political regimes of the Three Kingdoms, Unified Shilla and Koryo, Buddhism as a guiding ideology sustained Korean politics, economy, culture and other aspects of social life. This religion imported from China rose to be the linchpin of the mental structure of Koreans during these periods. Including the *Chokye* sect, Korean Buddhism consists of 21 sects which are mostly related with Zen. The believers visit the temples in order to pray at least once a week. The main service is on Sunday and lasts for approximately three hours. After the service the Buddhists get together and share a meal. The biggest holiday for them is the birthday of Buddha which falls according to the lunar calendar on the eighth of April every year(Fig.2-36, 37). The festival features various events including the lighting of lotus-lanterns. Monks hang lanterns above the temple grounds praying for the happiness of individuals, families and the nation.

One of the most prominent religious structures identified with Buddhism might

be temple. Now most temples in Korea are located on backcountry mountainsides. When Buddhism served as a national religion during the periods of the Three Kingdoms, Unified Shilla and Koryo, temples were dispersed throughout the country - plains, mountainous areas, towns and countryside. The power struggle in the interim of the transition from Koryo to Choson Korea led to the suppression of Buddhism and its replacement with Confucianism. The net result was the shrinkage of the number of temples, the disappearance of urban temples, and the superimposition of Confucian landscape components.

▲ Fig. 2-38 Buddhist Sanctum

The temples and other attached facilities had been arranged in such a way to represent ideals of Buddhism. Under the influences of Chinese and Indian Buddhism, the nascent Korean Buddhism came to stress the sites and types of temple pagodas. At the outset, the pagoda was structured into a domed shrine meant to preserve Buddha's and other saint monks' bones. A stupa of several stories in height was commonly built over a sacred place as a representation of devotion.

From the age-old tradition, Korean temples came to be arranged around the pagoda(Fig.2-38, 39, 40). There were two types of arrangement, one centered on a pyramidal tower and the other on two towers. In time, however, the pattern ended up to be a relic. With changing emphasis from stupa to Buddhist statue, the arrangement of temples took an entirely different shape. It was only until the early Koryo Dynasty that the pagoda occupied the central spot in Buddhist landscapes. Later on, the Buddhist sanctum replaced the role of the pagoda to be the most significant symbolic index of Buddhist landscapes. A lingering legacy of the former pagoda-centered view of the Buddhist world still exists in *tapdorri*, a special event in which Buddhists walk around a pagoda to pray for the Buddha's grace.

▲ Fig. 2-39 Temple Pagoda

▲ Fig. 2-40 Shrine of Mountain and Cosmic Gods within a Temple Ground

The plan of Buddhist temples centered on a sanctum is partly attributable to the fall of Buddhism and the relocation of temples from towns to the backcountry during the Chosun period. The geomorphic relief on which the backcountry temples stood no more allowed the pagoda-centered plan to be established on a flat town ground. Other factors that influenced the making of the Buddhist landscapes of Korea are Zen

Buddhism, Esoteric Buddhism, and various folk belief systems. To illustrate this point, it is commonly noticeable that local deities share the temple grounds with other Buddhist guardian deities.

Today the arrangement of temples has lost much of its original symmetrical structure. However, it still maintains the distinct color and style of the symbolic arena of Buddha. Entering the main gate, one is led in sequence to the gate of the four heavenly guardians of Buddhism and the gate of salvation. Passing through these three gates, he or she reaches the main ground of the temple where various rites are performed. Places for worshipping and reciting the Buddhist scriptures are inside the pavilion-shaped inner gate, which include a main shrine of Buddha and other minor shrines of the Merciful Buddha, the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy, and Disciples of Buddha. In the backyard a shrine of the mountain and cosmic Gods related with folk beliefs of animism and shamanism can be found.

▲ Fig. 2-41 Tongdosa Temple

▲ Fig.2-42 Diamond Terrace at Tongdosa

Korea has three big temples of Tongdosa in Yangsan County(Fig.2-41, 42), Haeinsa in Hapchon County(Fig.2-43, 44), and Songkwangsa in Sooncheon City (Fig.2-45). Tongdosa is known as one of the Three Treasure Temples for having Buddha's surplice and bones, Haeinsa for preserving Tripikata Koreana, and Songkwangsa for training influential monks.

△ Fig.2-43 Haeinsa Temple

△ Fig.2-44 Tripikata Koreana at Haeinsa

▲ Fig.2-45 Songkwangsa Temple

2) Confucianism in the Korean Landscapes

Having entered the Korean Peninsula in Three Kingdoms Period, Confucianism became the national ideology only after the founding of Chosun Korea. Although being a late starter, the ideology has had a tremendous impact on the shaping of the Korean landscape. Whereas Buddhism places emphasis on love and on distributing mercy and grace to all living things, Confucianism instructs morality and decorous codes of behavior in the household, society and the court. The primary emphasis was laid on hierarchical norms, which have been the single most important factor in maintaining the relationship between father and son, elder and youth, husband and wife, and king and ministers. The social order was reproduced at home and in schools through educating the young people to respect their ancestors, their seniors and

▲ Fig. 2-46 Jongmyo, Ancestral Shrine of Royal Family

▲ Fig. 2-47 Rite of Ancestral Worship at Jongmyo

▲ Fig. 2-48 Musical Performance at Jongmyo

the court. Women were supposed to follow what men said and what they requested them to do. These social norms were regularized in everyday life through various rites and rituals.

The Confucian tradition is still deeply ingrained in the Koreans' subconscious. In addition to rituals, this ideology generates a diversity of symbolic landscapes on various spaces. One of the long-lasting traditions might be the performance of ancestral worship. In Chosun Korea, all the hierarchy from king to commoners and even servile people held memorial services for their ancestors(Fig.2-46, 47, 48). The royal family regularly visited the Jongmyo Shrine, located near the main palace of Kyongbok to pay tribute to ancestral kings and queens. The shrine as a symbolic space

▲ Fig. 2-49 Sungkyunkwan, National Confucian Academy

▲ Fig. 2-50 Special Ceremony Honoring Confucius at Sungkyunkwan

of Confucianism shows a simple and controlled style of architecture. It has a long linear front distinct from Chinese shrines which are patterned somewhat differently. The conducts, manners and procedures of the rituals are specified into a Code of Worship Rite at Jongmyo Shrine. Historical document says that the number of the participants to the ritual reached more than 700 including the king, queen, princes, princesses, office holders, literati, dancers and musicians. The official music and dancing performed in the rite still survive today.

The upper class educated under the strong Confucian tradition performed rituals in shrines that housed ancestral tablets. The rite was the symbolic gesture of paying respects to ancestors who they thought took care of their descendants. The teachings of Confucianism became the basis of political ideology, family ethics, and personal behavior. Various events were held in the context of Confucian tradition and under the support of the court. A special ceremony to honor Confucius was held twice a year in *Sungkyunkwan*, a national university specializing in the education of Confucianism(Fig.2-49, 50). This institute

▲ Fig. 2-51 Hyangkyo, County School

of higher education accommodates Confucius, four disciples, sixteen Chinese Confucian scholars, and eighteen Korean scholars of Confucianism. In the countryside, the performance was held in the county public school called *hyangkyo* or in the private academy of *sowon*. Down to the level of each household, all family members gathered to pay tribune to their ancestors.

Institutions and facilities associated with Confucianism have enriched Korea's cultural diversity. Among a variety of landscape components the most prominent might be the county schools, private academies and shrines. As mentioned above, a public school on the level of county district was called a hyangkyo (Fig.2-51). It soon became the major institution for the transmission of Confucianism in the countryside. The courts ordered that every county establish public schools and provided lands and

△ Fig. 2-52 Plan of Dosan Academy,

△ Fig. 2-53 Overview of Sosu Academy

personnel for the purpose of supporting the operation and management of the schools. The institute played the double function of educating the elite and of performing the rites of commemorating Confucian scholars. Just as private academies did, the public school in time laid emphasis on the latter over the former. Some hyangkyos remain almost intact to this day while others which has damaged and disappeared ones have been reconstructed in former county seats.

Sowon refers to private schools of Confucian education. The institution at the same time performed the rites of venerating Confucian scholars of fame(Fig.2-52, 53). The founders of sowons had the concrete aims of materializing the teachings and disciplines of the sages of Confucianism. These educational and spiritual purposes are visually reflected in the allocation of space for the purpose of shrines, lecture halls and dormitories. For the prevention of blasphemy, local scholars encircled the shrines of saints with walls. Visitors and students were allowed only through the three gates standing in front of the shrine. The sowon was built following the line of simplicity not to give the impression of lavishness but to maintain

▲ Fig. 2-54 Shrine of Confucian Saints

the pure spirit of the literati. Each building was arranged in an ordered way to keep harmony among lecture halls, shrines and other attached buildings.

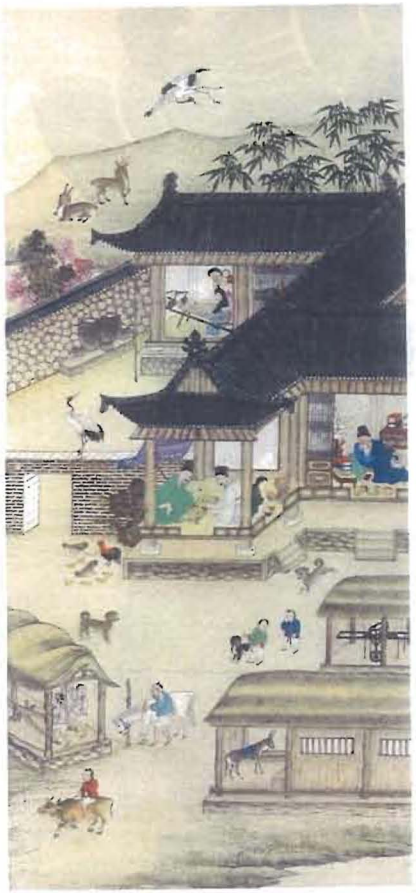
As a social agent, sowon played critical roles in getting the upper classes and literati close together in local areas with the help of an ideological medium of Confucianism. As a decision-making agent, sowon provided spaces for the discussion of local problems and probable answers to different issues. In some parts of the country especially in Andong and the neighboring counties of North Kyongsang Province, these private academies survive in large numbers. Andong County with Dosan and Sosu Sowons are known as the hearth of mainstream Confucianism or the core of the Lee Hwang School of Korean Confucianism.

Shrines of saints appeared as early as the Three Kingdoms Period(Fig.2-54). However, it was at the end of the Koryo Dynasty that the symbolic structures proliferated and diffused throughout the country. The expansion of Confucianism helped to make the shrines Korea's representative symbolic landscape of devoting to the saints and figures of meritorious behavior. At the outset, the shrines were meant to pay tribune to the saints and the private academies to Confucian education. As time went on, however, sowon absorbed the former into the latter function to be the center of Confucian culture in the countryside.

The Confucian culture and traditions of Chosun Korea were captured in their entirety in upper class housing. The dwellings for the literati were planned and structured following the rigorous disciplines of Confucian ideology. Above all, the housing expressed the power and status of the upper-class inhabitants and therefore served as a symbolic capital (Fig.2-55, 56). Following the dividing lines of political, economic, social and sexual status, dwellings were patterned in hierarchical, authoritative, closed and self-defensive fashion. In order not to spoil the dignity of the upper class, the architecture screened the inner buildings and details of family life from outsiders' gaze. Towering main gates and dexterously designed walls were one way of expressing authority. The affluent elite possessed a certain number of servile people within or without the houses. The living spaces were divided into *anchae* and *sarangchae* for the owners and *haengrangchae* for the owned.

▲ Fig. 2-55 Upper-Class H[illegible] Chos at Yangpyong

▲ Fig. 2-56 Upper-Class Housing of Kims at Euisung



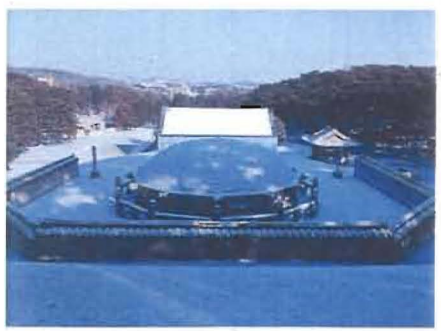
△ Fig. 2-57 Illustrated Structure of Upper-Class Housing

Outsiders entered the living quarter through the main gate and walked across the front yard before reaching the sarangchae. The sarangchae was a male-only quarter. The separation of space following gender lines stemmed from the Confucian convention that dictated that males and females of over seven years in age should not be together at any place. Visitors were treated in the male quarter where the eldest owner stayed most of the day. Built in highly impressive and splendid ways, sarangchae had garden trees and a pond nearby. The sarangchae was itself divided, following the line of generations, into large ones for heads of household and small ones for their successors. Anchaes for the females usually occupied the innermost space, far beyond the reach of strangers' vision. The subservient position and status of women in Confucian society restricted women's activities and movement into discriminating spaces within houses. The most important thing expected from women was just to manage household chores(Fig.2-57).

As such, Confucian teaching became the basis of everyday life especially for the upper class. The ideology instructed the youth to be pious and filial and not to be

▲ Fig. 2-58 Mountainside Graveyard

△ Fig. 2-59 Tomb Landscapes in the Jeju Islands



△ Fig. 2-60 Royal Tomb

negligent in worshipping ancestors. The national code of rituals required that every family reserve a space for practicing services for the foregone generations. Driven by moral obligation in association with ideology, the house of the eldest son normally had an ancestral shrine in the backyard. For his extended kin family, this shrine was a sacred structure which they thought took care of the fortune of all family members. Even for insiders, only limited access was allowed to the shrine where tablets of ancestors were preserved. In order to bar strangers' intrusion, the family built the shrine far back inside the house and established extra gates and walls around it. The actual tombs of the ancestors were in a family graveyard at close distance from the house and usually on a sun-exposed hillside. Unlike Buddhist societies that lack tombs on account of their tradition of cremation, Confucianism holds the graveyard as a central landscape feature(Fig.2-58, 59, 60).

3) Folk Beliefs in the Korean Landscapes

The roots of Korean folk culture can be traced back to animism and shamanism.

▲ Fig. 2-61 Rituals for Mountain God

▲ Fig. 2-62 Altar of the God of Mt. Mani in Kwanghwa County

▲ Fig. 2-63 Stone Mast Built fot the Well-Being of a Community

Animism is based on the belief that deities dwell in all natural things such as rocks, trees, streams, and the earth. Naturally this led to a polytheistic belief system. Shamanism, on the other hand, originated from the belief that problems of human societies can be resolved through the medium of a shaman's supra-natural capability. The shaman performs dances called *goot* to exorcise unwanted or evil spirits. The combination of these two pristine faiths has produced Korea's distinct folk religions.

It is said that every political regime conducted some sort of ceremonies to appease heaven, the center of the universe. During the Koryo Dynasty, for example, Koreans could pray at five sacred mountains, and the number of mountains visited increased to ten during Chosun Korea. Not a few Koreans believed that the divine beings of the mountains gave grace and mercy to them. From this conviction, people personified the mountains as Gods' sacred abodes and regularly performed rites to appease and soothe these deities.

God is thought to descend on the summits of mountains. In other words, these summits are the place where human beings and God meet together. It is thus the

▲ Fig. 2-64 Houses at Auspicious Site

▲ Fig. 2-65 Village Guardian Posts

▲ Fig. 2-66 Stone Post in Jeju Island

mountaintop rather than the mountain itself that becomes a sacred place(Fig.2-61, 62). Koreans have a sustained belief that the earth has the capacity and capability of healing ominous symptoms that they come across during their lives and this belief in Mother Earth is not a unique phenomena to Korea. The folk ideology of the natives combined with the foreign transplanted concept of *Feng-Shui* funded a systemic idealism of its own(Fig.2-63). Even today the location of houses is decided by taking the feng-shui physiognomy into account (Fig.2-64).

Village guardian posts might be one of the most widely known Korean folk arts. These wooden structures are called *jangseung, dyangseung, buksu* or *bupsu*(Fig.2-65, 66). Jangseung, a representative local artifact and cultural treasure, is made of wood or stone. The posts are not simply artistic products but also have other practical and symbolic functions. Foremost, they protect communities from evils and

at the same time serve as signposts or landmarks. The most important function of the posts, however, has been the protection of villages, temples, town walls, and other important places and things. Guardian posts standing in front of temples are understood to protect Buddhist scriptures and holy facilities.

Although five posts are established at the four cardinal directions plus the center, the guardian posts mostly exist in pairs or couples. One of the two posts is supposed to be a God that protects heaven, while the other, a goddess is meant to keep an eye on the earth. The facial expressions of jangseung are quite diverse. Some are smiling, others angry and grim, and still others intelligent. They might look like a bugaboo, a Buddha or a grandfather(Fig.2-67).

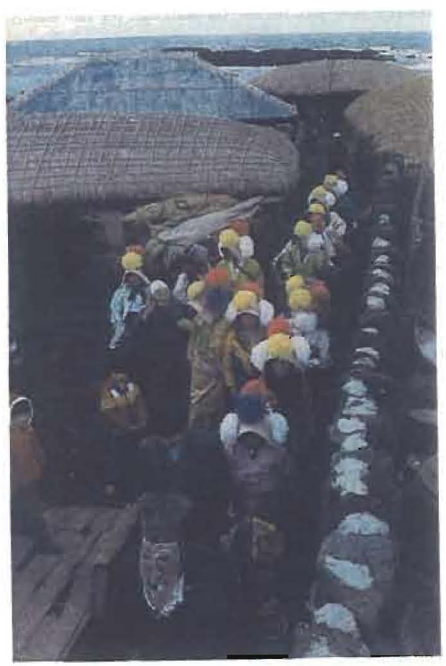
▲ Fig. 2-67 Jangseung with a Dignified Mien

Sotdae has almost similar functions to those performed by jangseung(Fig.2-68). Sotdae is actually a pole or stone column with a flying bird on top. Local people erect the pole at the entrance of the village at the time of community festivals around the fifteenth of January of the lunar calendar to pray for the well-being, prosperity and peace of the community. Furthermore people regard the pole as a divine protector of villages from vicious spirits. The pole normally forms partner with guardian posts, menhir, cairn and sacred trees to be worshipped as a main deity, an upper deity or a lower deity. Although a duck is usually featured at the top of the pole, depending on the region in Korea it could also be a crow, wild goose, magpie or crested ibis. Some sotdaes have two birds crested together and others stand by guardian posts. Historical documents identify the presence of sotdae as far back as the Early State stage. Interestingly a similar custom is reported to exist in China, Siberia and Japan. The iconography of pristine landscapes as sotdae originates from human beings' innate belief in cosmic trees. From a functionalist perspective, sotdae relieves the fears of epidemics, droughts and other calamities. Villagers, for example, believe that the pole brings rains on dried fields.

△ Fig. 2-68 Sotdae, Sacred Pole with a Messenger Bird on Top

The countryside has certain restricted or forbidden areas where, rural folks believe, the guardian deity protecting the village and its arable land resides. Altars to guardian deity are found within the bounds of these sacred places. Collectively these holy place and the structures inside them are called *sonangdang* and are usually

▲ Fig. 2-69 Altar House of the Village Guardian Deity



▲ Fig. 2-70 Communal Festival

located at the entrance of the village or at the crest of the hill dividing the village and the outside world(Fig.2-69). The sonangdang comprises a mixture of cairn, sacred trees and an altar house. Inside the altar house are tablets, pictures, icons or statues representing the deity to be worshipped.

In different regions, the sonangdang might be called *sunghwangdang, halmidang* or *chonwangdang*. Literally *sonang* means the sacred place or the personified deity helping to stop intruding mishaps, epidemics, calamities and wild beasts. The sonang is meant to bring in bumper crops. When a rural community is afflicted with unexpected accidents, a shaman will dance at the altar to exorcise the evil spirits or bad luck. Individuals hang a rag and hemp-cord sandal on sacred trees to pray for the health and happiness of the family. On a normal day, however, one does not dare to approach the place for fear of offending the deity who might otherwise get revenge and impose a punishment on the transgressor. The village guardian deity is both respected and feared.

Community rites and festivals are held at the altar. The ceremony proceeding in a festive mood is performed in order to

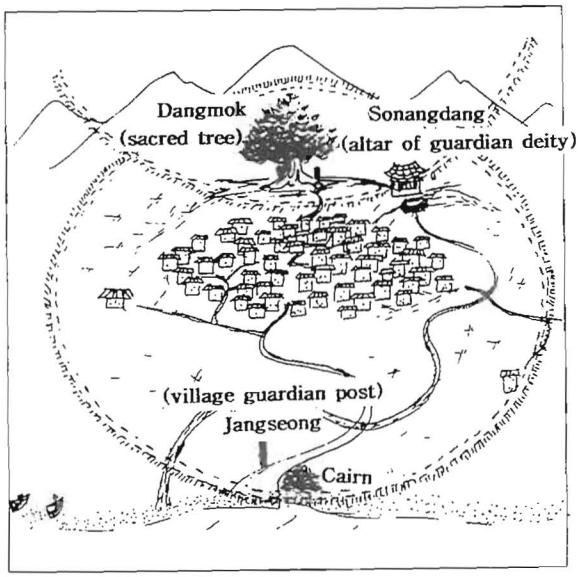
▲ Fig. 2-71 Traditional Masque Performance at Hahoe Village

▲ Fig. 2-72 Sacred Trees

▲ Fig. 2-73 Community Dancing Parade

thank the deity for providing security, well-being and a good harvest of crops and fish. The ceremony is organized by shamans or selected leaders of the community. In case the rite is to be conducted in the Confucian manner, a selected organizer of honest and dignified character has to set the whole plan for the ceremony. The event offers invaluable opportunity for the local people to get closer together, to share psychological unity and to perpetuate the precious cultural traditions of playing, dancing and folk music to the next generation. The highlight of the community ritual might be the dancing and singing parade prepared actually to please the village deity(Fig.2-70).

Hahoe is a nationally known place for the practice of folk and age-old Confucian traditions. The village in Andong County offers a special theatrical performance called *byolshinngoot*(Fig.2-71). A community service is held separately to pray for the well-being of local people on every fifteenth January of the lunar calendar (Fig.2-72, 73). Unlike these annual events, the masque drama of byolshinngoot is scheduled only once every ten years. Villagers on that day wear masques to



△ Fig. 2-74 Folk Belief Systems Reflected in Settlement Structure

impersonate clowns, popular musicians, literati, women and other roles. The drama consisting in all of twelve episodes reaches its climax when players make fun of and lay scathing criticisms on the upper class. The drama features performers wearing masques, traditional music, narration, poetic diction, dance, and plays depicting the process of parodying social conflicts, contradictions and the sorrow of society at large.

Folk villages have various cultural and symbolic icons from their entrance to their innermost(Fig.2-74). The first thing to be found at the entrance is a village hedge called *woosil*. It is supposed to protect the community directly through capturing the dust carried by the wind and indirectly by purifying the mind of the inhabitants living inside. The hedge is structured to encircle the entire village starting from and ending at the peak of a hill or the entrance. The hedge serves as the corridor leading to the altar of the village guardian deity.

Symbolically it divides the arenas of the sacred and the profane. Practically it helps to maintain the internal order of the community. Participating in setting up this structure, local people learn how to help each other to achieve communal goals and interests.

Another interesting structure is the menhir. Recognized as a meeting place of yin and yang, the menhir is believed to protect the village from misfortune and to guarantee a good harvest, prosperity and peace. The other point of notice might be the cult of genitals which is intimately connected with community life. The worship of vulval and phallic stones arises from the belief that this practice leads to fecundity, fertility and productivity.

Equally important are sacred trees. From time immemorial, there has been a tradition to mystify gigantic trees. Perceived as having transcendental power, the trees are planted in sacred places and communal services are observed at the sites. They are believed to link heaven to the world of human being. In shamanistic rituals, too, the trees are passages leading to heaven. With so much symbolic content, the sacred trees occupy the psychological, perceptual and geographical center of local

society and provide various cultural landmarks.

Sacred trees occupy the center of the community and superintend the everyday life of the rural people. Other functions of the trees are to command life and death, to assure fecundity and longevity, to free the village from diseases, to purify corrupted rural society and to pacify rural folks. The practice of worshipping sacred trees itself assists village members to unite into one. Sacred trees stretch the branches to imitate the shape of an umbrella. Villagers perform communal services in front of the trees for various reasons besides the functional purpose of consolidating the community physically and spiritually.

▲ Fig. 2-75 Altar House

▲ Fig. 2-76 Sacred Well

Far back inside the village is an altar house or a sacred well(Fig.2-75, 76). Behind this lies a vulval stone concealed among trees. The altar on the site commanding the view of the village is called the upper shrine. Inside the shrine are tablets of the grandma Goddess and mountain deities which are believed to take care of paddy, dry fields, streams and the human affairs intimately related with rural life. In return for this tribute to the deities, rural folks yearn for peace, well-being and the prosperity of their villages.