

POLICIES
TO
TRANSFORM
S E O U L

FUTURE

1



The Seoul City Wall

Walking the History of Seoul

Wu-Yong Jeon



서울연구원
The Seoul Institute

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Policies to Transform Seoul
Future 01

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Walking the History of Seoul

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What the Seoul City Wall Means to Us

In the Korean language, ‘Seoul’ is a common noun for a ‘leading city’ – that is, the capital city of a state. This common noun was used as a proper noun only after the declaration of the ‘Seoul Charter’ in August 1946 and referred only to the capital of the Republic of Korea. A capital is a limited space occupied by a cluster of political, financial, legislative, educational and other central functions and institutions, and a number of words were used during the Joseon Dynasty to indicate the same – Exemplary Place (suseon), Capital (gyeongjo, gyeongdo, gyeongsu, or doeub), City Wall (doseong) and Royal City (wanggyeong). There were other names used to refer specifically to the capital of Joseon, such as its official title Hanseongbu (Prefecture of Hanseong) or other popular names Hanyang or Hangyeong.

The wall surrounding the capital is referred to as doseong,

and so is the space within. This doseong is the physical boundary that separates the inside from the outside. Back in the days when people rarely left their birthplace and hometown, a trip to Seoul was a cherished dream but a lucky privilege enjoyed by only a few. Those who walked for days together to take civil service examinations administered by the state, to deliver official missives, or to visit relatives knew that they had reached the capital city when they saw the city guarded by its walls and gates. Not only did the walls symbolize Seoul; they were Seoul itself.

To residents of ancient Seoul, the walls dictated the general scenery of the city as well as the life within. When the bell at the Bosingak Pavilion rang and the gates to the city opened, it heralded the start of another day. When the bell declared the end of a day and the city gates closed, people closed their own doors behind them just in time for the curfew. Once the gates were shut, only women were allowed in the streets within the city, freed from their daytime confinement. Since the promulgation of the ‘Regulations on the Protection of the City (Suseongjeolmok; nine regulations on safeguarding the capital)’ during the reign of King Yeongjo (reigned 1724 – 1776), men residing within and adjacent to the city walls were assigned to certain sections of the walls that they

had to protect in times of crisis. City dwellers shared the fate of the city walls. To visit Seoul was to see the walls and to pass through them. To live in Seoul was to see the inside of the walls every day.

History brought with it a wave of modernization, a complete transformation of the law, system, culture, and life, powered by advanced transportation and broader roads. The surge of modernization blurred the boundary between cities and rural areas and pervaded the entire country and the whole world. Around the world, other city walls, too, stood helplessly in the face of modern transformation. In 1899, the walls of Seoul lost some of their functions due to the start of tram service. By 1907, they were regarded as outdated and were seen as something to be demolished. Be it the emperor or a commoner, anyone who had been born and bred in the capital found themselves at a loss when they saw the protective walls reduced to mere heaps of rubble. Imperialists saw no reason to allay such frustration. The invaders destroyed the fortification on flat ground adjacent to roads and tore apart some of the city gates to pieces. The sections on hills and mountains survived only because the aggressors did not feel the need to go through the trouble. As it turned out, the Korean tradition of making the most out of the surrounding

topography was the saving grace that prevented the complete annihilation of the old city walls.

Even when the colonial rule finally ended, the view of history sown by the Imperialists did not. For many years since the liberation from the colonial rule, Koreans have pitted tradition against modernization. Anything that was medieval or Joseon-like was considered archaic and was done away with. The identity of Seoul citizens, deeply intertwined with that of the old walls, was also considered medieval and obsolete. The chaos following the liberation, coupled with the disastrous Korean War, mutilated the old walls. The city's old walls crumbled day after day. In the 1950s and 1960s, when Seoul's population grew dramatically, the unoccupied space near the walls was quickly taken up by city dwellers and then by emerging neighborhoods. People took rocks from the old fortifications and used them as the foundations of their homes. The government was equally indifferent. It had no scruples about damaging the walls in the course of widening roads and constructing buildings.

By 1974, the South Korean regime adopted the Yusin (Restoration) characterized by rigid military unilateralism. President Jeong-Hee Park suddenly ordered that the city walls be fully restored. He wanted to bring back the mili-

tary heritage to life and aimed to instill a sense of national security in the minds of the people. The end not only justified but also pervaded the means. The project of rebuilding destroyed ramparts (the body of wall raised as fortification) and recreating parapets (a low protective wall on top of the rampart) was carried out like a military operation. In this supposed restoration, rules and principles were neglected. The massive project was thus finished in two years and was followed by small, intermittent restorative works. From the perspective of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the project was closer to destruction than it was to restoration. A considerable part of the restored walls was off-limits to civilians, nullifying the project's original objective of using the walls for the education of citizens.

In the 1990s, globalization became the cause célèbre of the era, speeding up international exchange in the private sector. This led to the accumulation of more information on walled cities around the world, especially in the private sector. With this change came a heightened general awareness of the value and originality of Seoul's city walls. The old city walls, which had been built in line with the traditions of Korean architecture, minimized disruptions to

natural surroundings. Of all the city walls that exist in the world, Seoul's walls had served their duty longer than any. In addition, the walls of old Seoul are an outdoor museum – a compressed version of a medieval kingdom's making, growth, decline, and modernization, well exhibited in the process of construction, repair, renovation, destruction, and restoration. By 2006, it was discussed that the value of the old walls – recently renewed in the hearts of Koreans – would do well to be recognized by the international community, too and that such opportunity should be used to revamp the preservation and maintenance system. Old practices, however, could not easily be reconciled with new objectives. To be included on the UNESCO World Heritage List, it was not just the maintenance system but the entire perspective and approach to cultural heritage that needed to be overhauled. However, old habits, combined with social conventions, die hard.

On January 31, 2012, Seoul Mayor Won-Soon Park toured the entire 18 kilometers lined by the old walls. After the visit, he has pledged to put forward a universally accepted preservation and management system, recognize the walls as the historical landmark of the capital, and consider the walls central to the city government's urban planning.

This was designed to uphold the city's historical value. This spurred the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) and civic society to treat the walls from the perspective that catered to the World Heritage requirements. They sped up preparations for the inclusion of the walls in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

By 2012, the walls were included in the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List. They were, however, rejected by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 2017 because the walls were not of “outstanding universal value (OUV).” Although the listing failed, the preparation process left the citizens of Seoul with a profound insight as to which direction their city walls as well as the city itself would take in the future. In this respect, the key objectives pursued in the endeavor to list the walls as the UNESCO World Heritage were successfully achieved in the preparation process.

What do the ancient walls of Hanyang, the old name of Seoul, mean to the people of modern Seoul? Primarily, the walls are an invaluable cultural heritage and tourist attraction. On the other hand, they are a border fraught with tension between those who wish to preserve its history and those who wish to modernize the city. In modern Seoul,

where the height of buildings is an indication of growth and prosperity, new buildings tower above the remaining old buildings resting their shoulders against the city walls. The areas around these aged walls has now become battleground where the obsession for growth clashes with the belated commitment to preserving history. The battle presents us with this question: Can we go beyond marketing our cultural heritage only for profit and create a climate favorable to both capitalism and history? When we contemplate this question and attempt to find an answer, Seoul will see a door open to a better tomorrow.

Wu-Yong Jeon

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CHAPTER 1



History of the Seoul City Wall



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The Walls Are Seoul

A City and Its Walls

In the New Stone Age, the agricultural revolution brought about a transformation that enabled humans to settle in one place. It was also during this period that people saw a dramatic advance in intelligence and were able to anticipate, calculate, and plan better. Quite unlike the wandering hunters and gatherers of the Paleolithic era, people of the new era learned to match the rhythm of their life to seasonal changes and found the secrets to long-term storage of seeds and harvest. While the most common Paleolithic relics in South Korea are hand axes and stone arrows, the most prominent Neolithic artifacts are comprised of comb-pattern pottery,

showcasing the major difference between the two times. To increase the harvest more easily, people began to tweak nature and humans slowly evolved into special beings who dared to confront nature.

Individuals or small groups, however, did not stand a chance against nature. They needed a system to mobilize masses for division of labor and teamwork. In building such a system, a group or an entity with the power to command emerged. This was the birth of a state. The process sometimes ran parallel with war between tribes in different stages of civilization, clearly demarcating the boundary between the ruler and the ruled and separating the group of people who issued commands from those who took commands. States brought together those facilities required for the command, control, and storage in one place and used them in conjunction to enhance the efficiency of each. The places that were packed with such facilities were then surrounded by walls as a way of asserting their authority and safeguarding them from external aggression. When the walls of Seoul were first built, the Privy Council (Dopyeonguisasa – a supreme government council that oversaw state affairs in the late Goryeo Dynasty (918 – 1392)) explained, “city walls are to separate the inside from the outside strictly and to brace the kingdom,”

indicating that the fundamental nature of the walls has been sustained without change to this day.¹ The Chinese character for ‘state’ or ‘country’ is 國, projecting an image of amenities surrounded by city walls. In ancient times, a country was comprised of a city protected by walls and farms ruled by the city.

At the heart of an ancient city was a temple that united dwellers with religion, flanked by those facilities required to sustain the city and extend its power and influence over farmers. These facilities included the following: military camps that revealed the authority of God and protected the city from aggression, warehouses that kept supplies brought into the city, markets that distributed the supplies in warehouses to city dwellers or exchanged with other cities, schools and archives, the institutions of re-production by priests, medical clinics and bathhouses that offered miracles of healing and revealed the omnipotence of God, and theaters and stadiums that were the medium between God and human.² Urban dwellers were then allowed to build their home in the spaces that remained. Citizens of an ancient city were thus comprised of priests and their chief, and the experts who took up specific, subdivided functions required in a city.

Even while city states were merged into territorial states and religion was torn away from politics, cities continued to retain their structural framework. Before industrial and trade-centric cities emerged from the capitalist industrial revolution, cities were a special cluster of governance-related amenities. In the Korean and Japanese languages, the word for ‘city’ is represented by the following Chinese characters: 都 (pronounced do in Korean) – ‘all’ or to have all necessary functions – and 市 (pronounced si in Korean) – a place where exchange takes place. In Chinese, 都 is replaced with 城 (which means “defensive wall”), indicating the greater emphasis on form than on function. In any case, a city was a walled space with the amenities that are necessary for a state to be run and for urban dwellers to live.

How Fortifications Were Erected in Korea

Hwanwoong led a group of three thousand people and came down to the divine altar tree (sindansu) on the summit of the Taebaeksan Mountain. The place was called the Divine City (Sinsi). He was Hwanwoong, the Heavenly King. He ordered the Earl of Wind (Pungbaek), the Master of Rain (Wusa), and the Master of Clouds (Wunsa)

*to oversee crops, life, disease, punishments, good and evil,
and some three hundred sixty different human affairs to
govern and enlighten the world.*

- Records of Marvels, *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*

Thus begins the founding myth of Dangun, the progenitor of the Korean people. Hwanin, the Heavenly God, had a son named Hwanwoong who came to earth with experts to oversee 360 different human affairs and the first thing they did upon arrival was to build the ‘Divine City’ under the divine altar tree in the Taebaeksan Mountain. This Divine City was the first city historically recorded in Korea. The universal feature in world history is the founding of a state by building a city, which is undoubtedly evident in the Dangun myths. The Divine City is not the only one of its kind in the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk yusa)*. Three other cities are also mentioned in relation to the myths – Pyeongyangseong where Dangun built the capital of Joseon, Asadal of Baegaksan Mountain to which he moved the capital, and Jangdanggyeong, a new capital when King Wu of the Chinese Zhou Dynasty sent Qizi (a loyal subject to the Chinese Shang Dynasty) to Joseon 1,500 years after the country had been founded.

Of these cities, the Divine City (Sinsi) and Asadal are presumed to be associated with the modern word ‘Seoul.’ From Seoul, ‘ul’ may refer to ‘uri (cage)’ or ‘ultari (fence)’ – a structure built to surround a given space for restricted access, such as wall or fortification. There are views that the capitals of ancient kingdoms on the Korean peninsula – Wirye, the first capital of Baekje and Seorabeol, the one of Silla – had names closely linked to this word uri. Seorabeol was often written as Donggyeong (東京, East Capital) or Geumseong (金城, Metal Fortification): i) Donggyeong (East Capital) was construed and read as Saebeol by Korean linguist Ju-Dong Yang. Geumseong (the Chinese character for geum represents metal and is read as swe in native Korean) becomes ‘Sweul’ if we assume that the native Korean equivalent for the Chinese character seong (fortification) was ul.

‘Seo’ from the name of Silla’s capital Seorabeol and ‘swe’ from Geumseong have the same meaning as ‘so’ in Sodo, an ancient sacred ground for the people of Samhan tribes. All these seem to correspond to the modern ‘sot’. Sot, the trace of which appears in a verb ‘sotda’ (soar) and a noun ‘sotdae’ (sacred pole), means ‘to rise to the sky,’ or ‘sacred.’ In other words, Seoul could have meant ‘sacred seong’ or ‘sacred beol’ while Asadal meant a place that comes close to Seoul (Sadall),

or a second Seoul.³

There is no telling where the Divine City or Asadal is mentioned in the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*. Neither do we know their precise location nor could we be certain if they had really existed. If, however, they had existed, then they would have been undoubtedly surrounded by fortification. According to the *History of the Three Kingdoms* (*Samguk sagi*), fortified walls were built around the palace in the twenty-first year of Hyeokgeose (37 BC) and were called Geumseong – the first documented capital fortification in Korean history.⁴ On this matter, the sixteenth-century *Newly Augmented Geographical Survey of the Territory of the Eastern Kingdom* (*Sinjeung Dongguk yeoji seungnam*) wrote: “Geumseong is located four-ri to the east of the prefecture of Gyeongju. During the reign of Hyeokgeose, earth ramparts had stretched for 2,407 cheeks (one cheek is approximately 30 centimeters) in circumference.”⁵

The tradition of fortification building continued through centuries to shape the city walls of Seoul. Inherent features could be traced back to Goguryeo fortresses of Guknaeseong and Winaamseong. According to the ‘Records of Goguryeo (Goguryeo bon-gi)’ in the *History of the Three Kingdoms*, the kingdom of Goguryeo moved its capital from Jolbon to

Guknae in the twenty-second year of King Yuri (AD 3) and built Winaamseong. Guknaeseong is thought to have been the fortification in today's Jian, Jilin Province of China. Winaamseong is estimated to have been located at the site of Shanchengzi Fortress on a hill, approximately 2.5 kilometers to the northwest of Guknaeseong. Guknaeseong must have served as the capital while Winaamseong played an assisting role or served as the hinterland in times of crisis.

Goguryeo's practice of building a fortification on the flat ground as well as on the hill was passed onto the Goryeo Dynasty and its capital city of Gaegyeong (Gaeseong). By structure, Gaegyeong had its royal palace Suchanggung surrounded in three layers of fortification – outer walls (oesong or naseong), inner walls (semi-circle wall, naeseong), and imperial walls (hwangseong). The walls of Gaegyeong were 23 kilometers long, about five kilometers longer than the walls of Hanyang that were built in Goryeo's succeeding dynasty, Joseon. The walls of Gaegyeong were not completed as soon as the palace had been built. Instead, they were built at different times to supplement the existing walls. The foundation of the Gaegyeong fortification had first been set up earlier in AD 896 when Taebong (a country established by Gungye in the late Silla era) had built its fortress called Bareochamseong

in Songaksan Mountain. This later became a protective layer of fortification when the new kingdom of Goryeo set up separate palace walls at the foot of the Songaksan Mountain. It was around the early eleventh century that Goryeo surrounded the entire city with inner walls, after seeing its capital Gaegyeong fall to the Khitan invaders. For an extra layer of protection on the outside, Goryeo established Daeheung Fortress. Toward the end of the dynasty, Goryeo bore the onslaught of the aggression of the Red Turbans bandits and Japanese pirates and decided to build inner walls to safeguard crucial points within the bounds of the outer walls. By the thirteenth century, Gaegyeong fell into the hands of Mongolian invaders. Forced to move its capital, Goryeo set up a city with new palaces and walls in Gangdo. Once again, the fortification was in three layers – inner, middle, and outer walls – partly due to the geographical features of Gangdo. However, another reason was that the new capital attempted to recreate the structure of Gaegyeong, complete with outer, inner, and imperial walls.

During the succeeding Joseon Dynasty, its capital Hanyang was protected by the city walls and supplementary fortresses. Their structure and build were quite similar to those of the Gaegyeong fortification in the preceding Go-

ryeo Dynasty. Soon after the Joseon Dynasty was declared, Hanyang was established. By 1624 (the 2nd year of King Injo's reign), the Namhansanseong Fortress was built for the defense of the capital against Qing invaders and was designed to be used as a temporary royal residence in time of crisis. In 1711 (the 37th year of King Sukjong's reign), the Bukhansanseong Fortress – existed since the Three Kingdoms era – was fully renovated. In 1718 (the 44th year of King Sukjong's reign), the construction of the Tangchundae Fortress was initiated to connect the Bukhansanseong Fortress to the city walls. The fortification of Hanyang – connecting the city walls with the two fortresses to the north and south of the city as well as with auxiliary walls linking mountain fortresses and city walls – inherited the system not only of the preceding Goryeo Dynasty but also of the earlier Goguryeo that had fortified structures both on the plains and on the mountains.

In Search of a New Capital

Building of the Southern Capital and Attempts to Move the Capital During the Goryeo Dynasty

In the seventh lunar month of 1392, Seong-Gye Yi, with support of his generals and officials, put an end to the Goryeo Dynasty and founded a new one. The new ruler immediately ordered the Privy Council to move the capital to Hanyang. Generally referring to the region to the south of Bukhansan Mountain and to the north of Hangang River, Hanyang was considered auspicious by practitioners of ubication (pungsu) since the times of Silla. Goryeo too established the city as Namgyeong (Southern Capital) and tried several times to move the capital to this strategically posi-

tioned city.

Downstream areas of Hangang River that cut through Seoul today were open fields with tall mountains all around, providing good land where the previous generation had formed villages. Today, their traces can be seen in the Neolithic settlements in and around Amsa-dong and Misa-ri. It was here that Baekje, a kingdom founded before the turn of the first millennium, declared its capital city. During those times when the Three Kingdoms clashed amongst themselves, Hanyang and its vicinity were the center of hegemonic struggle. Those in power understood that without controlling Hangang River, there would be no dominance. Found in the Achasan Mountain area, bastions (a structure built against enemy aggression) used by Goguryeo testify to the conflicts. Having won the Hangang River area after the war against Baekje, Goguryeo became the strongest of the Three Kingdoms. However, the region was soon taken away by Silla, the kingdom that united them all. The conqueror, King Jinheung climbed Bukhansan Mountain and erected a historic monument, indicating how overwhelmed he was to have the area under his control. This piece of land, located to the south of Bukhansan Mountain and to the north of Hangang River, was named Hanyang (called as the Prefec-

ture of Hanyang) in AD 757 in the sixteenth year of King Gyeongdeok.

After the foundation of Goryeo, the Hangang River and Hanyang assumed greater significance. In 1067 (the 21st year of King Munjong's reign), Hanyang was elevated in its status and was named the capital of the south (Namgyeong) – one of the three capitals of Goryeo (Goryeo sam-gyeong) alongside Gyeongju, the capital of the east, and Pyeongyang, the capital of the west. Later, the southern capital was immediately demoted and became part of Yangju, until it was reinstated as the capital during the reign of King Sukjong (1095 – 1105). The proposal to relocate the capital city surfaced during this time, owing to the fierce struggle over the throne as well as frequent force majeure. Contemporaries blamed the ill fortune of the kingdom, and believers of geomancy thought it necessary to move the capital for the revival of the kingdom.

One of the champions of the relocation was Wi-Je Kim, an executive assistant of royal insignia (wiwi seungdongjeong; an honorary position of seung, sixth grade junior in grade, at Wiwishi, an organization similar to today's Presidential Security Service) and master in the knowledge of the workings of eum (negative) and yang (positive) energy. He added his own ideas to such books as *Records of Doseon* (*Doseon gi*), *Doseon's Songs*

from *Visits to Mountains* (*Doseon dapsanga*), *On the Auspicious Places of Samgaksan Mountain* (*Samgaksan Myeongdanggi*), and *Divine Records and Secret Verses* (*Sinji bisa*), claiming that the southern capital should be placed on the field between the south of Samgaksan Mountain and Mokmyeok (the old name of today's Namsan Mountain in Seoul). According to him, thirty six countries would come bearing tributes and the kingdom would enjoy peace if the king made Songak the central capital, Pyongyang the western capital, and Mokmyeokyang (Hanyang) the southern capital. In addition, the king had to stay in the south between March and June, in the west in July through October, and in the central capital in November to February.⁶ King Sukjong accepted this suggestion. In the sixth year of his rule in 1101, a Directorate for the Establishment of the Southern Capital (Namgyeong Gaechang Dogam, a temporary office for the construction of the southern capital) was installed to find a site for the new capital near Hanyang. The Directorate sent out officials to study the lands near Hangang River, Bukhansan Mountain and Baegaksan Mountain, and other such places. The construction began near today's Gyeongbokgung Palace area and was completed after two years and eight months. During this time, the king's secondary palace, pavilions, gardens, local Confu-

cian school (hyanggyo), and such facilities were built. Gyeongdong – a modern administrative district located in Jongno-gu, Seoul – got its name from the hyanggyo, or Confucian school of the Goryeo Dynasty. The walls had not been built at that time.

Goryeo's southern capital was significantly larger than the capital of the succeeding Joseon Dynasty, the prefecture of Hanseong. The capital of the south was bounded by Naksan Mountain in the east, Ansan Mountain in the west, Baegaksan Mountain in the north, and Yongsan in the south. After the construction was completed, King Sukjong of Goryeo came with his subjects and stayed in the southern capital for ten days or so in August 1104 (the 9th year of King Sukjong's reign) before heading back to Gaegyeong. In the southern capital was the Protector of the Capital (Yusugwan), responsible for the regional administration. At the time, the southern capital oversaw the area that makes up today's Seoul and western Gyeonggi-do. For the next two hundred years, till the later years of the reign of King Chungnyeol, the southern capital served as the seat of government administration for Gyeonggi-do and remained the favorite destination for royal excursion.

In 1308 (the 34th year of King Chungnyeol's reign), however,

the southern capital was once again demoted to the Prefecture of Hanyang. King Chungseon, who was returning to throne for the second time that same year, completely overhauled the government structure to suppress local powers and reinforce royal authority. The revocation of the status of the southern capital was one of the steps taken by the new king. The Prefecture of Hanyang was no longer the regional center of administration. It was reduced to a mere prefecture. Hanyang did not re-emerge as a suitable site for the kingdom's capital until the accession of King Gongmin (1352 – 1374). While eliminating those noble families working in a cozy relationship with Yuan China to eat slowly away at royal influence, King Gongmin pushed through reforms to restore the status of the government and military systems, which had been altered by the intervention of the Yuan Dynasty. Accordingly, the Prefecture of Hanyang once again became the southern capital.

The reforms were fiercely resisted by those who depended on Yuan China and exploited Goryeo for their own benefit. Revolts and further political turmoil ensued. By 1356 (the 5th year of King Gongmin's reign), the monarch resolved to make another plan to move to the southern capital. The palace was repaired, city walls were put up, and preparations

were made until the spring of the following year, but the plan never came to fruition in the face of opposition from bureaucrats deeply rooted in Gaegyeong. King Wu, the successor of King Gongmin, had also attempted the move a few times. When he came to the throne, he planned to build a new capital close to Gaegyeong in Cheorwon, Yeoncheon, or Jangdan, but was discouraged by the objection to this move resulting from the lack of manpower and resources. The idea once again resurfaced in 1381 (the 7th year of King Wu's reign). In August of the following year, the king accepted the proposition of the practitioners of geomancy who had suggested that the king move the royal residence to some place that was insulated from frequent natural disasters. In the following month, the king finally moved his residence to the south. He stayed for six months and then returned to Gaegyeong. In 1387 (the 13th year of King Wu's reign), he devised a plan to move to the southern capital permanently. First, he summoned the Forum of the Elderly to discuss the matter. Village troops (bangnigun, a private military organization) were mobilized in Gaegyeong to build the Jungheungsanseong Fortress – today's Hansanseong Fortress. In the midst of construction and change, General Seong-Gye Yi disobeyed the king's order (the incident famously known as the withdrawal from

Wihwado) and seized power. The plan to relocate foundered once again.

Goryeo's last monarch King Gongyang also resorted to the move as a way to overcome the approaching decline of the dynasty. In September 1390 (the 2nd Year of King Gongyang's reign), the king ordered Geuk-Rryeom Bae, Vice-Minister of the Royal Chancellery (Munhwa Pyeongni, a second grade junior), to mend the palace in the southern capital and moved in. Soon afterwards, terrifying deaths due to tiger attacks occurred in the southern capital, followed by suspicious indications of conspirators attempting to abandon the old dynasty and to start a new one by enthroning Seong-Gye Yi. The king had to return to Gaegyeong in a mere six months. In the Goryeo Dynasty, Hanyang was the number three city after Songak and Pyeongyang and was the number one candidate for a new capital since the mid-dynasty. To Goryeo, today's Seoul was the city to which many of its kings had attempted to move in but never succeeded. In any case, numerous plans and attempts to move sowed the seed of belief in the hearts of people: if a new dynasty were to be established, Hanyang would be the perfect place to serve as the capital.

Building Hanyang the Capital

Rise of the Joseon Dynasty and Hanyang the Capital

In 1392, King Gongyang was deposed and the Goryeo Dynasty came to an end. Having launched a new dynasty, Seong-Gye Yi and his supporters dived into the issue of moving the capital. Reasons to relocate were many and clear. They were not free from the contemporary belief in ubication, that the rise and fall of a dynasty was determined by the energy of the land. What was more, they could not fully trust the officials and supporters of the old dynasty who had an extensive and strong network rooted in Gaegyeong and shaped over the past 400 years. Not only that, it was simply

unthinkable to enshrine the fathers of the new dynasty in the same city that had the tombs and memorial tablets of the former kings of Goryeo. To vindicate the cause of the dynastic revolution, the founders of the new dynasty needed a new capital to embody their ideals.

The new Joseon Dynasty, however, inherited subjects from the old Goryeo Dynasty. They had their wealth and social contacts back in Gaegyeong. To them, the move to a new capital meant abandoning the human and material resources for which they had worked hard. As soon as someone voiced the need to have its capital elsewhere for the new dynasty, opposition erupted everywhere. Some insisted that building a new capital immediately after laying the foundation of the new dynasty would exhaust human and material resources and create resentment among the people. Others claimed that Gaegyeong had prevailed as the preceding kingdom's capital for 400 years because the site was auspicious and that the previous dynasty had attempted to move to Hanyang numerous times, all in vain. Seong-Gye Yi, however, did not relent, saying, "Rulers of old, who attempted to subvert previous dynasties always moved their capital cities."

Once the decision was made, the search for the site began immediately. Candidates were nominated, such as sites

near Hanyang (*e.g.*, at the foot of Baegak and Ansan Mountains, Wangsimni) and others such as Gyeryongsan Mountain in Gongju and Jindong-hyeon (today's Jinsan Mountain) in Jeollado. At one point, construction was even started at the foot of Gyeryongsan Mountain. Everything considered, however, there was no better option than Hanyang. Hanyang was not only auspicious but also strategically located at the center of the kingdom, well positioned for pervasive administrative influence over both north and south. Being located by Hangang River with rich tributaries, it was a perfect place for the taxation system (called *joun*) which was based on transporting local in-kind taxes to the capital by ship. The land is surrounded by rugged mountains on three sides and has a big river to the south, offering impeccable security. On October 25, 1394 (the 3rd year of King Taejo's reign), the king finally made the decision to move to Hanyang. And construction commenced.

Building Hanyang the Capital

In 1394 (the 3rd year of King Taejo's reign), the first phase of the construction of the royal palace and the Jongmyo Shrine was completed. In the lunar month of September in the

following year, the Directorate for City Wall Construction (Doseongjochuk Dogam) was set up. In Joseon, a directorate (dogam) was set up temporarily for a national event or project and was closed after the end of the project. As in the Goryeo Dynasty, the Directorate was served by the Superintendent (pansa) and Assistant Superintendent (bupansa), Secretary (sa) and Assistant Secretary (busa), Assistant Prefect (pangwan), and Recording Clerk (noksa). The responsibility of selecting sites for the capital walls was assigned to Do-Jeon Jeong, the superintendent of the Finance Commission (pan Samsa sa; a first grade senior official serving the Finance Commission in the early Joseon government).⁷

On his mission, Jeong chose the 18.1-kilometer stretch along the mountain ridges of the Baegak, Inwang, Mokmyeok, and Nakta. The Directorate then divided the length by 600 cheeks (a cheek is approximately 30 centimeters) into 97 sections and named each of them after the Chinese characters in the order of their appearance in “One Thousand Characters (Cheonjamun).” Each section was then assigned to the care of a village. Two sections each were assigned to an official called gamyeok (a ninth grade position) who was appointed to oversee laborers mustered from other regions. For the labor, commoners were mobilized from all over the

country. In the Joseon Dynasty, freeborn commoners, but not the elite or the lowborn, were subject to tax, tribute, and corvée. Tax was imposed on harvest; tribute meant local specialties, and corvée was manual labor or service. One of the most common corvée duties was military service, but there were other labor duties as well, such as road-building (chidoeyeok) and fortress-building (chukseongyeok). The Joseon government had liberated those people who belonged to the Goryeo gentry and made them commoners. For the newborn government, the construction of the capital walls was a test of its authority over all commoners across the kingdom.

During the farming off-season in January 1396 (the 5th year of King Taejo's reign), 118,070 commoners were summoned from the northwest and northeast, excluding those in Gyeongsang-do, Jeolla-do, Gangwon-do, and areas adjacent to the capital. Commoners from Gyeonggi-do, Chungcheong-do, and Hwanghae-do also arrived in the city for the work. Although Hanyang was the old site for Goryeo's southern capital, the resident population was not large. The government was already quite preoccupied with building the royal palace, Jongmyo Shrine, Altar for Earth and Grains (Sajikdan Altar), and government offices, so it could

neither spare any more resources to build nor could supply the laborers with places to stay. In the frigid winter, some 200,000 laborers toiled with no roof over their heads. In the two off-season months, workers built stone walls in the flat-ground sections and earthen walls in the hilly terrains. The stone wall section extended for 19,200 cheoks while the earthen wall section stretched 43,000 cheoks. Stones were natural and unpolished rocks that were found near construction sites. At the starting point of each section, the names of construction workers and supervisors were inscribed for increased accountability.

After the spring and summer, the government once again summoned 79,400 commoners to build the city walls. For two months after the lunar August of the same year, laborers completed the sections left unfinished previously, repaired the stone walls which had been damaged during the rainy season of summer and finished gatehouses. According to the 'Record of Technology and Crafts (Gogonggi; Kaogong ji)' of *The Rites of Zhou Dynasty* (*Ju rye; Zhouli*), to which the builders of the Hanyang city walls referred, the capital city of the Son of Heaven was to have three avenues and three gates in each of the four directions from the royal palace. Considering itself a princely kingdom, Joseon lowered itself

in status by having only eight gates.

Due north is Sukcheongmun Gate, and to the northeast is Honghwamun Gate, also referred to as Dongsomun Gate [Small East Gate]. Due east is Heunginmun Gate, or Dongdaemun Gate [Great East Gate]. To the southeast is Gwanhuimun Gate, also called Sugumun Gate [Water Gate]. Due south is Sungnyemun Gate, known as Namdaemun Gate [Great South Gate]. To the northwest is Sodeokmun Gate, or Seosomun Gate [Small West Gate]. Due west is Donuimun Gate, and the gate to the northwest is called Changuimun Gate.⁸

Big Gates and Water Gates of Hanyang

Sungnyemun Gate is the south gate of Hanyang, named according to the Five Constant Virtues (Osang; Wu Chang) of Confucianism – benevolence (in), righteousness (ui), proper rite (ye), knowledge (ji), and integrity (sin). Of these, south was represented by ‘proper rite’ (ye). In the era of Joseon, the Prefecture of Hanseong – the administrative division of Hanyang – was the embodiment of Confucian ideology, founded in a space predominantly dictated by its nature sur-

roundings. A monarch oversees the south from the north (帝王南面), according to the 'Record of Technology and Crafts' of *The Rites of Zhou Dynasty* that presents guiding principles for building a Confucian city, which was why the south gate – now famously referred to as Namdaemun Gate – was made the main gateway to the capital. Namdaemun Gate was designed for national rituals, for instance, sending off troops or welcoming Chinese and was magnificently and splendidly built. A lofty, solid stone foundation was built, through which a gateway was constructed, arched as delicately as a rainbow. The foundation was then covered by a double-tiered wooden roof over the gatehouse. This was a rare feature, shown only in Sungnyemun Gate and Heunginjimun (or simply Heunginmun) of all the Hanyang gates. These two gates were also the only ones described as the 'great gates' in the *Annals of King Taejo* (*Taejo sillok*). Unusually, Sungnyemun Gate's tablet was hung vertically, which was a deliberate move to suppress the energy of fire represented by the south. The construction began in 1396 (the 5th year of King Taejo's reign) and was initially finished in 1398. It was fully renovated in 1448 (the 30th year of King Sejong's reign) and repaired extensively in 1479 (the 10th year of King Sejong's reign). For the next 550 years, Sungnyemun Gate served as the main

gateway to Hanyang, iconic to Seoul. It was designated as the first National Treasure of South Korea in 1962, but the gatehouse was severely damaged in a fire set by an arsonist in 2008. Restoration work started soon after and was completed in 2013.

Heunginmun Gate is the east gate of Hanyang. In from its name means benevolence – one of the Five Virtues of Confucianism represented by the east. As with its southern counterpart, Heunginmun Gate, too, had a double-roofed gatehouse to demonstrate its supreme authority. It was frequently used by kings when they entered or left the capital for royal excursions or hunting. Seoul is lower and flatter to the east, making its eastern walls located between Naksan and Mokmyeok Mountains relatively vulnerable to enemy attack. To overcome the weakness and effectively attack approaching enemies, the gate has crescent-shaped outer walls. Its tablet reads Heunginjinmun Gate – a carefully chosen name to overcome the topographical features. Heunginjinmun Gate was established in 1396 (the 5th year of King Taejo's reign) and renovated in 1453 (the year of King Danjong's accession). By the mid-nineteenth century, however, the ground caved in and the gate walls developed cracks. The gate had to be taken apart in 1869 (the 6th year of King Gojong's reign)

and was subsequently enlarged. Original stones were reused while the parapets were completed with bricks, adding a fresh new look to the gate.

Originally built in 1396 (the 5th year of King Taejo's reign), Donuimun Gate is the west gate to Hanyang. Ui – righteousness – in the name is one of the Five Constant Virtues of Confucianism, represented by the west. The gate was closed in 1413 (the 13th year of King Taejong's reign) and was replaced by a new one called Seojeonmun Gate, located to the north of Donuimun Gate. The new gate was soon demolished in 1422 (the 4th year of King Sejong's reign) and the older Donuimun Gate was reinstated after repair. It was during this process that Donuimun Gate earned its nickname “New Gate” (saemun or sinmun in Korean), which explains the name of the road to the front – Sinmunno (literally, New Gate Road). When the capital was extensively renovated in 1711 (the 37th year of King Sukjong's reign), the gate was also rebuilt, but all traces were lost when it was torn apart in 1915. This west gate had a single-tier roof over its gatchouse – a class lower than its southern and eastern counterparts. In Joseon, the gate was rarely called as Seodaemun Gate (Great West Gate).

Sukcheongmun is the north gate to the capital, and was also built in 1396 (the 5th year of King Taejo's reign). According

to the Five Constant Virtues of Confucianism, north symbolizes knowledge (ji). The gate, however, did not use this character ji in its name. Seoul is lower to the south while its northern terrain is higher. It was believed that if the energy of north were to be added to the name and thereby boost the northern energy of the northern terrain even further, the capital would then be rampant with the negative energy. At first, Sukcheongmun Gate did not have any gatehouse. It usually stayed closed except in unusual times such as severe drought. Since the mid-sixteenth century, Sukcheongmun Gate was written as Sukjeongmun Gate, probably because the character cheong (淸) has ‘water’ (水) in it, which would presumably intensify the negative energy. The gatehouse and the name tablet were added as part of the renovation in 1976. Not once had this gate been referred to as Bukdaemun Gate (Great North Gate) in Joseon.

Changuimun Gate, the northwest gate, came along when the city walls of Hanyang had been built initially. The gate had a nickname – Jahamun Gate – because the surrounding landscape was similar to Jahadong, one of the beautiful attractions of Goryeo’s capital, Gaegyeong. Since the north gate of Sukcheongmun Gate was kept closed at all times, Changuimun Gate was often referred to as the north gate.

The original gatehouse has destroyed during the Japanese invasion of 1592. The current one was built in 1740 (the 16th year of King Yeongjo's reign) and is older than any other gatehouses of the city walls. It was officially designated one of the national treasures in 2015.

Gwanghuimun Gate is the southeast gate placed between Sungnyemun Gate and Heunginjimun Gate. It was referred to as the Bridge of One-arch Gate (Water Gate) due to its proximity to the Five-arch Water Gate (Ohgansumun Floodgate) and the Double-arch Water Gate (Igansumun Floodgate). In Joseon, no burial of the dead was allowed within the city walls and all corpses had to be taken out. When there were deaths, Gwanghuimun Gate and Souimun Gate were the gates designated for the purpose. Thus, the gate earned its moniker, Sigumun Gate (Corpse Gate). It was repaired in 1711 (the 37th year of King Sukjong's reign) while the city was revamped, but its gatehouse was destroyed during the Korean War. The gate was moved 15 meters south while roads were widened in 1973. A new gatehouse was added then.

Referred to also as Dongsomun Gate (Small East Gate), Hyehwamun Gate is a gate located between Heunginjimun Gate (the main east gate) and Sukcheongmun Gate (the main north gate). Its first official name was Honghwamun Gate,

but was renamed as Hyehwamun Gate in 1511 (the 6th year of King Jungjong's reign) to avoid confusion with Honghwamun Gate, the east gate to Changgyeonggung Palace built in 1483 (the 4th year of King Seongjong's reign). A new gatehouse was added in 1684 (the 10th year of King Sukjong's reign) when Hanyang was renovated extensively, but it was torn down in 1928. The gate's stone foundation and hongye-arched passageway were completely demolished in 1939. It was not until 1992 that the gate was rebuilt to the west of its original location.

Widely known as Seosomun Gate (Small West Gate), Sodeokmun Gate is located between the gates of Sungnyemun Gate and Donuimun Gate. A new gatehouse was built in 1738 (the 14th year of King Yeongjo's reign), and the gate was renamed as Souimun Gate in 1744 (the 20th year of King Yeongjo's reign). Like Gwanghuimun Gate to the southeast, Souimun Gate was the gate through which funeral processions passed. Outside this gate, an execution ground was present. It was completely torn down in 1914, as were the walls nearby.

Other than these gates, the old city had two more gates, used to let the rivers flow out of the capital. Called the Five-arch Water Gate, one such gate was located between

Heunginjimun Gate and Gwanghuimun Gate. An arch was about 1.5 meters wide and was barricaded to restrict access. In 1907, the fences were removed to facilitate the water flow. In the following year, the walls above the Water Gate were taken down. Between this Five-arch Water Gate and Gwanghuimun Gate, a double water gateway was built for the stream that flows out of Namsan Mountain and merges with the main stream outside the city. When Gyeongseong Stadium was constructed by the colonial Japan in 1925, stones were taken from the water gates to build the spectator stands. When the removal of the Stadium (widely known as the Dongdaemun Stadium after Korea's liberation from the colonial rule) revealed considerable architectural remains in fairly good condition in 2007, the lower section of the Water Gate was restored and the upper section was newly built.

Renovation of Hanyang

Renovation under King Sejong

On the fifteenth day of ninth lunar month in 1396 (the 5th year of King Taejo's reign), King Taejo (Seong-Gye Yi), the founder and the first king of the Joseon Dynasty, moved into Gyeongbokgung Palace in stately adornment. The palace looked as a royal palace should, but the city was yet to be completed. The area within the city walls was called the Prefecture of Hanseong under jurisdiction of which were five boroughs (bu) – east, west, north, south, and central. The 10-ri (one ri is approximately 400 meters) area from the outside of the walls was referred to as Seongjeosimni which fell under the Prefecture's jurisdiction. Even after King Taejo moved to

the Prefecture, political confusion remained.

In August 1398 (the 7th year of King Taejo's reign), two years after the move, the first Rebellion of the Prince erupted. King Taejo had six sons (including Bangwu, Banggwa, and Bangwon) by Queen Sinui of Han Family and two sons (Bangbeon and Bangseok) by his second consort Queen Sindeok of Gang Family. Do-Jeon Jeong, one of the most meritorious subjects who aided the king in founding the Joseon Dynasty, believed that, for the future of the kingdom, it was better to grant more authority to government officials whose ability and competence had been proven, rather than to grant full authority and power to a king whose wisdom and competence could not be guaranteed. He, then, persuaded the king to appoint the son by his beloved second consort – the king's eighth child – as the crown prince. Jeong's next move was to disband private armies of the princes borne of Queen Sinui and incapacitate them. The sons of the first wife, especially Bangwon and Banggan, revolted. They killed Do-Jeon Jeong, Crown Prince Bangseok, and Bangbeon (another son of the second consort) and supported King Taejo's second son Banggwa (by the first wife) as the new crown prince. Ten days later, King Taejo abdicated his throne to the new crown prince.

As his kingship in the new capital was rooted in bloody

fratricide, Jeongjong (Banggwa), the second king of Joseon moved the capital back to Gaegyeong in March of the following year. High ranking officials accompanied the king as well, but half of the officials at capital bureaus were left behind, demonstrating the king's intention to run the kingdom in parallel from two centers – Gaegyeong (Gaeseong) and Hangeong (Hanseong). However, the king had no children, meaning that the throne would give rise to even more conflicts. As expected, the childless king's brothers were competing with each other for seizing the throne. In January 1400 (the 2nd year of King Jeongjong's reign), Banggan (the fourth son of the former King Taejo) and Bangwon (the fifth) clashed. The younger son won. Banggan was incarcerated in Tosan, Hwanghae-do up north. All his supporters were killed. In the following month, King Jeongjong named Bangwon the crown prince and granted his brother full control over the affairs of the state. The king soon abdicated the throne in November.

Now on the throne, Bangwon, or King Taejong, put in some efforts to make Gaeseong the permanent capital. In July 1404 (the 4th year of King Taejong's reign), he even attempted to move the Jongmyo Shrine and the Altars from today's Seoul to Gaeseong until Jun Jo advised him that there was

a historical precedent where Zhou China had maintained two capital cities in Chang'an and Luoyang. The king must have found it cumbersome to shuttle between Gaeseong and Hanseong. He soon gave an order to build a secondary palace in Hanseong. On October 11, 1405 (the 5th year of King Taejong's reign), King Taejong headed to Hanyang even when the secondary palace had not been fully constructed. He stayed in Jun Jo's house for almost ten days and moved into the just finished royal residence which he named Changdeokkung Palace. As soon as the palace was built, construction to make a waterway and the quarters for royal subjects and servants began. In the meantime, the city walls, which had been hastily put up during the reign of King Taejo, were left with the damage inflicted during the last decade. Some parts of earthen walls had collapsed while some stone-built sections had cracks in them. King Taejong, however, paid no attention to these things. Except for the closing of Donuimun Gate and the construction of Seojeonmun Gate, nothing was done to the city walls during his time.

King Taejong was succeeded by King Sejong who decided to reinforce all sections with stone and established the Directorate for City Wall Renovation (Doseongsuchuk Dogam) in 1421 (the 3rd year of King Sejong's reign). In December of that

year, the Directorate drafted a plan to requisition 430,000 laborers from the kingdom's provinces. The number was twice of what was mobilized by King Taejo. This meant that the royal house and government had stronger control over the kingdom. Faced with the objection by the officials from court who insisted that the number was too big, it was reduced by more than 100,000 to 320,000.⁹

The construction took place for three months in winter. There is no precise count of the number of workers who were injured or fell ill during the project. However, the fact that a separate medical clinic was set up indicates that quite a few laborers must have fallen ill or sustained injuries. On the twenty-third day of lunar February in 1422, the work on the city walls was finally completed. All earthen sections were transformed into stone walls, all built to standard heights. Where the topography was rugged and hilly, the walls were built up to a height of 16 cheeks (1 cheek is approximately 30 centimeters) and to a height of 20 cheeks where the terrain was relatively gentle. On the flat plains, the walls were erected to the standard 23-cheek height. The city now had another Double-arch Waterway in addition to the existing Five-arch Water Gate to facilitate the flow of the river. Seojeonmun Gate was closed and Donuimun Gate was rein-

stated. Traversing in and out of the walls were circuit roads measuring 15-cheok wide, to be used for tours and patrols. Some 106,199-geun metal and 9,610-seok lime were used for the job.¹⁰ The total length of the repaired stone walls was 3,952 cheoks and the earthen sections turned to stone walls extended to 24,535 cheoks. Unlike in the times of King Taejo when unrefined natural stones were used, the rocks used to build and repair the walls under King Sejong were uniquely polished in the shape of corn kernels, adding fresh, interesting features to the beautiful walls. The rocks were primarily quarried from sites near the walls, but the foundation stones were sourced from abandoned houses and sheds as well. The work must have taken a heavy toll on natural rocks in the four inner mountains encircling the capital as a ban was imposed on quarrying rocks from the mountains after the construction was completed.

During the era of King Sejo, Namsomun Gate (Small South Gate) was built near today's Banyan Tree Club & Spa Seoul. The precise date of construction is not known, but there is a record of King Sejo taking royal relatives and high-ranking officials to Cheonghak-dong to visit the site on November 20, 1456 (the 2nd year of King Sejo's reign). The estimated year of completion is 1457. The record is too brief to understand

the reason for building a new gate, but it is quite likely that geomancy played its part. Having slaughtered his young nephew and brothers to seize the crown, King Sejo frequently resorted to Buddhism and geomancy, probably out of guilt. For the next forty years, Namsomun Gate stood its ground until it was closed after his death in 1496 (the 1st year of King Yejong's reign). There had been rumors that "Crown Prince Uigyeong [son of King Sejo and brother of King Yejong] had died after opening Namsomun Gate," and practitioners of geomancy petitioned the new king that Hanyang would be struck by misfortune if a gate opened to the south-east of the city. Even after the gate was closed, numerous suggestions were made to open it again, but permission was not granted. In the years that followed, the city walls were repaired here and there under the supervision of the Board of War (Byeongjo), but was never renovated as a whole. Upon detecting signs of Japanese invasion, King Seonjo's court discussed the issue of adding parapets to the walls, but the talks fizzled out due to financial reasons.

Repairs Under King Sukjong and King Yeongjo

Though the walls faithfully fulfilled their role of 'demar-

cating the inside from the outside', they were useless from the aspect of fortifying the kingdom. When Japan invaded in 1592, King Seonjo abandoned the capital as soon as he heard the news of approaching enemies and escaped to Uiju for safety. During the Manchu invasion of 1636, King Injo escaped as well. Since troops followed the king, not even one battle took place in the capital.

Having surrendered, King Injo was forced by Qing Emperor Taiji to kowtow (prostrating oneself so low as to touch the ground with forehead) thrice in humiliation. As part of the terms of the truce, the Emperor even insisted that the fortification that was destroyed must not be rebuilt. This meant that the Emperor would regard any attempt to repair or rebuild fortification as a challenge to Qing. Over the years, time took its toll on the walls, damaging ramparts and battlements as well as the kingdom's dignity, but Joseon had no option but to leave the walls as they were. Even as King Hyojong covertly prepared his northern campaign, nothing could be done either to the city walls or to the other fortresses across the kingdom.

The issue of disrepair resurfaced after King Sukjong came to the throne. In 1675 (the 1st year of King Sukjong's reign), Prince Yeongsin (Hyeong) went to Qing China as an envoy

for national mourning, bearing incense and funeral ode. When he returned, he came with the news that Wu Sangui led a mutiny and that Qing might request Joseon for support in the form of troops. At the court of Joseon, some officials advised the king that the internal strife of Qing China was a perfect way to avenge the humiliation and that it was best to wait and watch for an opportunity. If Qing were to request soldiers, they added, Joseon should decline, even if it meant war. As part of this suggestion, officials planned to rebuild the Bukhansanseong Fortress for the king and the court to stay safe in times of war (Bojangchoe). The king agreed, but Qing never asked for help, putting the agenda on hold.

The issue only came up again in 1702 (the 28th year of King Sukjong's reign), some three decades later. That year, Third State Councilor (Uuijeong) Wan Sin proposed that a new safe house for the king be built in Bukhansan Mountain since Ganghwado Island and the Namhansanseong Fortress were far from the capital and would be difficult to defend. This idea was hotly debated in court for quite some time. Opposing officials argued that building another fortress when the king already had the Namhansanseong Fortress and Ganghwado Island would only result in wastage of resources and

add to the frustration of the people. They said that owing to the rugged terrain of the Bukhansanseong Fortress, the chain of command would be seriously undermined even if orders came directly from the king. If Qing were to find out, Joseon would have to answer for it, they added. After a year of discussion, King Sukjong was still determined to build the Bukhansanseong Fortress and issued a decree to commence the construction. The opponents of the idea insisted that the repair of the city walls should be done before the construction of the Fortress.

King Sukjong then decided to repair the city walls first, at the request of a group comprised mainly of the School of Westerners (seoin). In March 1703 (the 29th year of King Sukjong's reign), in the Samgaksan Mountain, the government organized a ritual of informing the God of Heaven of an important decision (goyuje) and sent out officers from the Five Garrisons stationed in the capital (Ohgunmun) to quarry rocks in Nowon and Juam. The job of cutting rocks and trees was assigned to residents of Gyeonggi-do who belonged to the military. It was bitterly resented, as these people had to abandon their farms. Many of them were injured and died while moving rocks.¹¹ In January 1705 (the 31st year of King Sukjong's reign), when everything was under prepara-

tion, a debate was once again sparked in court because some officials had belatedly learned about the promise made in 1637 that the fortification would not be rebuilt. While some argued that everything – and all the preparations – would be in vain if Qing disapproved, others feared the consequences if Qing's envoy were to discover that the repairs were carried out. King Sukjong figured out that the matter could indeed turn out to be serious if Qing disapproved. He decided to send someone for Qing's approval.¹² Having successfully suppressed Wu Sangui (吳三桂) and the Revolt of the Three Feudatories and having seized control of China, the Qing Dynasty did not care about the repairs taking place in Joseon.

Under the reign of King Sukjong, the repairs were done by soldiers, unlike during the reigns of King Taejo and King Sejong. Prior to the Japanese invasion of 1592, the military duty system had already begun to collapse as it had become increasingly commonplace to offer cloth in payment in return for duty exemption. During the invasion, the Military Training Command (Hullyeon Dogam) had also been established, and occupational soldiers had emerged. Two foreign aggressions had also resulted in the establishment of the Five Garrisons (Ohgunmun) in the capital, namely the Military

Training Command (Hullyeon Dogam), Capital Garrison (Geumwiyeong), Royal Guards Command (Eoyeongcheong), Command of the Northern Approaches (Chongyungcheong), and Defense Command (Sueocheong). Now the job of cutting rocks and building the walls was given to full-time soldiers, soldiers on rotation shift, or hired laborers. The number of workers required was, therefore, lower than before, and the whole process was much more time-consuming. In 1707 (the 33rd year of King Sukjong's reign), after two years of construction, the repairs to the eastern and western sections were completed. In 1709, the government ran out of resources and gave up its plan to repair the rest, except for the battlements.

For the rampart, granite was cut into 45 centimeter by 45 centimeter quadrates. Compared to the rocks used in King Sejong's times, which had been natural with only their corners polished, these stones were much more solid and refined. Rocks had been primarily sourced from Nowon and Juam, which were located outside the walls. However, the government began to take rocks from farther quarries located in Cheongsu-dong just beyond Gujunbong Peak, Sado-dong and Bulcheon as well as from areas near Changuimun Gate and Hyehwamun Gate, mainly due to delays and casu-

alties. At certain points on the walls, the names of garrisons and supervisors in charge of the construction were inscribed for better accountability. Now that the main weapon of choice for Joseon troops had become guns, the parapets of the battlements were equipped with close-range and long-range embrasures.

The repairing of damaged ramparts and rebuilding of battlements were wrapped up in 1711, seven years after construction had begun. That same year, Gwanghuimun Gate was also remodeled.

As soon as the city walls were completed, the issue of building the Bukhansanseong Fortress came up again. In 1710, Qing sent an envoy to notify Joseon that pirates that had escaped from Qing's campaign might turn up on the shores of Joseon and wreak havoc and instructed Joseon to reinforce its defenses. This, in effect, nullified the agreement they entered into with Qing in 1637 not to repair or rebuild fortification, and opponents who had argued that the repair could 'leave Qing suspicious' lost their case. In February 1711, King Sukjong appointed Jin-Hu Min as the director overseeing military affairs (Gugwandangsang) for the region of Bukhansan Mountain and assigned Jung-Gi Kim to work with him and resume the postponed construction of

the Bukhansanseong Fortress. The work was wrapped up in six months, on October 25. In the following year of 1712, a decision was made to build middle walls as per Yu Yi's proposal. The walls were erected in more than two years.

Now that the Bukhansanseong Fortress was completed, Yu Yi once again made a suggestion in 1715 (the 41st year of King Sukjong's reign) that the government stock up food to prepare for a potential siege and build an additional wall linking the city walls with the Bukhansanseong Fortress, for improved defense. The idea, however, was not accepted immediately as the Bukhansanseong Fortress construction had just ended. Some officials also asserted that an additional wall would only make the defense line longer and thus more vulnerable. The issue was nevertheless debated for a prolonged time until 1718 (the 44th year of King Sukjong's reign) when a decision was finally made to build new walls on the high grounds of Tangchundae Pavilion. The work began in lunar August of that year. Initially, half of the intended length was completed in three months, by October. After a brief pause, the construction was resumed in the February of the following year and was completed in 40 days. With the conclusion of the construction of the Bukhansanseong Fortress and Tangchundae Fortress, the Prefecture of Hanseong was now

protected in multiple layers – the city walls and fortifications to the north and south of the capital. Joseon’s fortification – which inherited Goguryeo’s style of building walls on the flat ground and fortification on the hilly terrains – was recreated right here in Hanyang, in a method that was quite similar to that of Gaegyeong. Further repairs were later made in some sections under the reign of King Sunjo, but the overall structure and system remained the same.



Construction Techniques and Structural Functions

Construction Process and Techniques

While officials were struggling to calculate the circumference before building the outer walls, heavy snow fell during one night. Snow stacked up on the site on the outer section, but it melted as soon as it touched the ground on the inner part of the walls. Finding it odd, King Taejo ordered that the walls be built along this edge of snow. This was how today's fortification was shaped. The walls were dictated by the natural topography, but the eastern and southwestern sides were low and frail. Furthermore, parapets had not been built atop the walls, and no moat (a channel dug around fortification) had

*been dug. Thus the walls failed to protect [the city] from two foreign aggressions in the year of Imjin and the year of Byeongja.*¹³

The construction of city walls and fortifications began with finding a proper site. At the outset of the Joseon Dynasty, when the decision was made to move the capital city to Hanyang, the issue of where to build and place gates had been quite an arduous task. The government had decided that it was best to link the ridges of Baegak, Inwang, Mokmyeok, and Nakta after examining the topography and area between Bukhansan Mountain and Baegak, Wangsimni, Muak, and other such possible options. In addition, to abide by the Confucian capital-building principle that required monarchs to face south as they attended to state affairs as per the ‘Record of Technology and Crafts’ of *The Rites of Zhou Dynasty*, Baegak (Bugaksan Mountain) had to be the principal mountain. As above, Jung-Hwan Yi gave a rather amusing account of this process in his *Geographical Record of the Eight Provinces (Taengniji)*. Furthermore, the length stretching along the ridges of these four inner mountains encircling the capital was shorter than that of the outer walls around Gaegyeong.

It would have been better to build a bigger and more magnificent capital city in order to showcase the power and authority of the new kingdom. However, King Taejo made Hanseong more modestly sized, when compared to Gaegyeong. While the decision had been largely affected by Hanyang's geography and geomancy, King Taejo must have also been influenced by his own military experience. Assuming that the number of soldiers was the same, the longer the walls were, the farther the gap between each man would become.

The construction of the capital walls was supervised by the Directorate for City Wall Construction during King Taejo's times and by the Directorate for City Wall Renovation under King Sejong. For the construction, twelve people, including the Superintendent (pansa), Assistant Superintendent (bupansa), Secretary (sa), Assistant Secretary (busa), and Assistant Prefect (pangwan) were assigned to each section. They were responsible for motivating laborers summoned from other parts of the kingdom as well as for ensuring a sound structure. The total length of the city walls was divided by 600 checks into 97 sections, each named after the Chinese characters in the order of their appearance in "One Thousand Characters (Cheonjamun)." Accordingly, the identifying Chinese characters (Cheonjamun

starts with 天, 地, 玄, 黃) were inscribed at the starting point of all sections, according to the order. Apart from that, the names of the garrisons in charge of the construction were also written at the starting point of their corresponding sections. Since the time of King Sukjong when the national corvée system gave out, the responsibility of building the city walls was given to the military garrisons. To remind them of their duty, the rank, affiliation, and garrison of the supervisors were etched into stones.

The walls were erected not only at the very top but also on the slight downward slope from the top of the ridges. This made it easier to reinforce the foundation. Earthen ramparts on the even grounds did not require much compacting, but stone walls could not be built without compacting. As a primary measure, larger rocks were piled on designated sites and gaps were filled with smaller stones and earth. The process (called *jijeong*) was repeated to compact the land and prevent the walls from collapsing under the load. If the ground was earth, it was dug deep and piles were driven into the ground or stones were thrown in to make the ground firm. If the ground was rock, it was made flat to prevent slipping. Once the ground was compacted, foundation stones were placed along the outer edge. Sometimes they were covered

with slabs so they would not be damaged by rainwater. On top of the foundation stones were piles of natural slabs or rocks cut into quadrates, stacked up to a height of five to six meters to make a rampart. This was covered with battlements and then with roof stones.

Extracting rocks and cutting and finishing them were two of the most intense components of city wall construction. Under the reigns of King Taejo and King Sejong, these works were done near the construction sites, but when King Sejong decided to turn all sections into stone walls, rocks were extracted only from outside the city. By 1448 (the 30th year of King Sejong's reign), even that was prohibited in response to the petition from Su-On Jeon (an instructor in the study of eum (negative energy) and yang (positive energy) from the Four Schools of Hanyang and regional Confucian academies).¹⁴ From then on, until the time of King Sukjong, when a decision was made for a full repair, laborers were subjected to the onerous task of extracting rocks from afar and transporting them all the way to the capital and then up the steep hill to the mountain ridges.

The stone walls built under King Taejo were mostly natural. They were piled on top of each other without much finishing, and gaps were plugged with small stones. During

King Sejong's reign, stones used on the outside of the walls were cut into quadrates, regardless of their sizes. The largest stones were at the bottom, growing smaller as they went up. They were arranged in line with bed joints as best as possible. The overall technique did not change much and mainly comprised of compacting the ground and filling the walls with earth and stones. Since the eighteenth century, however, façade stones were cut into standard sizes – 40 centimeters wide and 45 centimeters long for the first repair under the reign of King Sukjong followed by quadratic stones of 50 by 60 centimeters. Façade stones were positioned so that they leaned slightly inward, and bed joints were aligned horizontally regardless of the topography. On the inside of the walls, the ground was compacted by alternating earth and stones. Building the walls to a height meant that scaffolds (raised structure) were needed. To build a scaffold, laborers dug holes in the ground (either earth or rock) and drove in four wooden piles, in between which wooden planks were fixed with twine.

Structure and Functions

At a closer look, the city walls of Hanyang had the following

structure and functions. First, the city walls were comprised of ramparts, battlements, and embrasures. The body was generally referred to as rampart on top of which a low-built battlement was placed. The rampart was comprised of stonework facing outward and backfill on the inside. To withstand the load of backfill earth and stones, the stonework leaned inward as it grew taller. Accordingly, the top and the bottom had a difference in width of a meter. The battlement, often called by different names, was a design to allow soldiers to protect themselves while they attacked the enemy.

The city walls of Hanyang had battlements that were crenellated – square indentations with alternating merlons (the solid part of indentations) and crenels (the space between merlons). There is no way of finding out what the battlements looked like in King Sejong's days, but those built under King Sukjong had embrasures to reflect the change in weaponry – the introduction of gunnery. The embrasures were built to accommodate different gun ranges: the horizontal ones were for longer range shooting while the holes slanted downward were for close-range shooting.

Second, the city gates of Hanyang functioned as a barrier to restrict the special wall-surrounded city from coming into contact with the outside. Anyone leaving or entering the

bounds had to pass through the gates and the time at which the gates closed or opened were controlled by the state. Before the gates were opened or closed, the bell located at the bell tower at the heart of the city would toll. Built when the city walls were in their infancy, the belfry was originally a two-tiered structure that was five-kan wide on the front, placed to the forefront of today's Tapgol Park. It was moved to the current location where Jongno and Namdaemun-ro Avenues intersect in 1413 (the 13th year of King Taejong's reign). In 1440 (the 22nd year of King Sejong's reign), the old belfry was taken apart to build a grand, extravagant bell tower that could be seen from anywhere in the city. The tower and the bell were, however, ravaged during the Japanese invasion of 1592. This time, the government built a single-tiered tower where a bell from Wongaksaji Temple, made in the days of King Sejo, was hung.

Third, the walls were added with special features to make up for vulnerabilities and enable efficient defense. Ongseong is a semi-circular outer wall built to hem in encroaching enemies for counterattack. Added to the gate in 1397 (the 6th year of King Taejo's reign), the feature can be seen at Heunginjimun Gate. Another feature is a flanking tower called chiseong. It projects from the walls, enabling soldiers

to assault enemies from three sides. During the time of King Yeongjo, six 'chiseong's (a battlement atop a wall) were added to the north of Gwanghuimun Gate and were assigned to the Royal Guards Command for management. Projecting outward on a curve aligned to the natural curve of the topography, 'gokseong' is a feature that has the same function as a flanking tower. Gokseong were located at the east of Baegaksan Mountain and at the western peak of Inwangsan Mountain. There are sentry posts and barracks (seongnang) to be found on the walls, of which 75 were set up in King Yeongjo's time, positioned five paces from the walls. There were 24 posts under the Military Training Command's jurisdiction in the section running from Donuimun Gate to Sukjeongmun Gate, another 24 under the supervision of the Capital Garrison in the section from Donuimun Gate to Gwanghuimun Gate, and 27 managed by the Royal Guards Command in the section extending from Sukjeongmun Gate to Gwanghuimun Gate.

Management of the City Walls

When the repair of Hanyang's city walls was completed in 1422 (the 4th year of King Sejong's reign), the Directorate for City Gates (Seongmun Dogam) was installed. The Directorate was responsible for inspecting and reporting any issues with the walls and making repairs as necessary. In Joseon, most buildings in the capital were wooden or thatched or a combination of both, making them extremely vulnerable to fire. Once those building caught on fire, they quickly spread and burned everything within its reach. In February 1426 (the 8th year of King Sejong's reign), a fierce fire started in Seoul, destroying a 106-kan wide building of the Directorate of the Capital Markets (Gyeongsiseo) and 2,170 homes. It also claimed 30 lives – excluding those who 'were burned

to death and reduced to ashes.’ The damage was equivalent to one-tenth of government office buildings and homes of citizens. After the fire, King Sejong approved the petition of the Board of Personnel (Ijo; a government office responsible for selecting government officials and relevant affairs) and established the Office of Fire Control (Geumhwa Dogam). The Office of Fire Control was overseen by the Minister of War (Byeongjo Panseo), honorary advisor to the Prosecutor’s Office (Uigeumbu Dojejo), and a Chief Magistrate of Hanseong Prefecture (Hangseongbu Pansa) to quickly mobilize troops in the event of fire.

Because both the protection of city gates and the fire control were the responsibility of soldiers, a decision was made in 1426 (the 8th year of King Sejong’s reign) to integrate the Directorate for City Gates with the Office of Fire Control to form the Office of City Protection and Fire Control (Suseonggeumhwa Dogam). Soldiers in this new Office watched over the walls and inspected the gatehouses of Sungnyemun in the south and Heunginjimun in the east for any likely occurrence of fire. The Office was, however, closed in May 1460 (the 6th year of King Sejo’s reign) and the job of wall repair was transferred to the Board of Works (Gongjo) while the responsibility of staying alert against the occurrence of

fire went to the Hanseong capital city government. By 1481 (the 12th year of King Seongjong's reign), the organization was revived and became a permanent establishment – the Bureau of City Protection and Fire Control (Suseonggeumhwasa). After the Japanese invasion of 1592, the Three Armies Office – comprised of the Capital Garrison, Military Training Command, and Royal Guards Command designed for the capital defense – supervised anything that had to do with the city walls, such as patrol, security, repair, and renovation. By 1745 (the 21st year of King Yeongjo's reign), the 'Regulations on the Protection of the City (Suseongjeolmok)' was proclaimed by which the jurisdiction of the Three Armies Office was defined and finalized.

In early Joseon, any damaged or collapsed section of the walls had been repaired by regional military troops. Since King Sukjong's times, however, the city gates and walls were taken care of by the Three Armies Office. When garrisons found damage while on patrol, they would follow the necessary procedures to report it to the king. Upon receiving the report, the king would order the Office of Works (Gongjo, a government office in charge of civil engineering and construction) to put up a fence around the damaged section and direct the responsible garrison to repair it. Garrisons on duty would send

soldiers out and keep a watch over the site on shift until the construction was over. As for the repair, skilled workers were recruited. They were paid according to the length of the assigned section. Once rampart works were done, soldiers were pulled out and battlements were built. From the day of first report to the completion of battlements, it generally took two months.



CHAPTER 2



Life Inside the Walls of Hanyang



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What It Meant to Live Inside the Walls

After building its capital and walls, the Joseon Dynasty named the walled city the ‘Prefecture of Hanseong (Hanseongbu).’ Evidently, the Prefecture is the administrative name for the new capital, but it was also the name for the second-grade senior government office overseeing the walled city and the 10-ri (one ri is approximately 400 meters) area from outside the walls. The Prefecture of Hanseong was in charge of not only general administrative affairs like household registration, market management, crime control, mountain/river management, and road maintenance, but also criminal court. Along with the Government Censorate (Saheonbu) and the Board of Punishments (Hyeongjo), the Prefecture was referred to as the Three Grand Judicial Offices (Sambeopsa).

Under the Prefecture were five boroughs (bu) – east, west, north, south, and central. Each of these boroughs was then subdivided into ten or so districts (bang).

A district was then divided into subdistricts which were (pronounced yi or ri) set apart by roads. The Chinese character for yi (or ri, 里) signifies small roads branching off big roads with plots of land on either side of those small roads. Yi usually consisted of a local community that shared a cul-de-sac. In 1465 (the 11th year of King Sejo's reign), each yi was to have a Yimun.¹⁵ Yimun was a gate put up at the entry leading into a cul-de-sac, to be closed when the city gates were closed. Above the gate was a gate tower from which one of the residents stood watch (yagyeong; keeping a night watch to prevent fire and crime). During the reign of Prince Yeonsan, however, most of these neighborhood gates were torn down because they were thought to serve as the hotbed of rebellion against the monarch.

Yet, there was another reason that explains why these community gates lost their utility and left in decay. As an administrative unit, yi had not reflected the structure and division of private networks formed voluntarily by citizens. Failing to mirror the actual division of communities, yi was replaced by a system of gye since the middle period of

Joseon. Gye was a guild of residents marshaled for the upkeep of the capital city as much as it was a unit of imposing corvée. Soon gye too, was replaced by dong. In the capital city, more neighborhoods shared waterways than cul-de-sacs. Substantially, Seoul was different from capitals of other kingdoms. Much like its preceding powers, the Joseon Dynasty did not attempt to dictate or conquer nature. Joseon did not try to relinquish the old school of thought that there was a line drawn by heaven as dictated by nature, which should be left uncrossed by human. It was because of this belief that Seoul was built in careful conformity to the line marked by nature. Irrespective of whether they were in power or not, people had the same attitude toward nature. This was why residents of Seoul related better to the system of dong – a community sharing the same waterway – than to yi – a community defined by small man-made roads. The Chinese character for dong (洞) shows this by combining the character for ‘water (水)’ with ‘with (同).’

Completed in the 1420s, the *Geography Section of the Annals of King Sejong* (*Sejong sillok jiriji*) documented that the number of households within the walls was 17,015 and that of the ten-ri radius from outside the walls was 1,779. The outer section was more than five times greater in area

than the inner city, but its population was only a tenth. The administrative affairs for the outer area were also addressed by the Prefecture of Hanseong, but the two areas within and without, set apart by the walls, were two entirely different worlds. Within the walls lived those people who were absolutely essential to sustain the royal house and the state. While they were exempt from taxes, tribute, and corvée, they were responsible for keeping the walled city clean and had to organize their daily lives as commanded by the state. These responsibilities (bangyeok) included cleaning the roads before royal processions, cleaning fallen leaves or snow from the palaces, taking care of the forests in the four mountains encircling the capital, and bearing a bier at state funerals. The duties were imposed also on those living near rivers or royal tombs within the ten-ri radius from the city walls. Riverside residents were required to transport grain submitted as tax into the city walls (the duty was referred to as taemaunbuyeok) or to extract ice and store them in the ice storage in the winter (jangbingyeok) while people living close to royal tombs had to build and take care of the royal house of the dead (neungyeok).

Those who lived outside the walls were allowed to get into the walls only in certain circumstances like taking a state

examination to enter government service, being recruited as soldiers or technicians, or supplying vegetables, fruits, firewood, meat, and other goods required to sustain the life within. Even after the walls lost their function of serving as the city boundary, residing within the walls was still a source of great pride.



City Gates = Gate to the Kingdom

The signal of bell striking at the third jeom of the fifth watch of each night (approximately 4 a.m.) was called bara (or paru) while the bell sounding at the third jeom of the first watch (approximately 10 p.m.) was called ingyeong (or injeong). The Bureau of Astronomy (Gwansanggam) would measure time each day and deliver it to the bell tower where the bell was tolled 33 times at the hour of bara and 28 times at the hour of ingyeong. This system was related to Taoist and Buddhist beliefs. Bara was to inform the thirty-three heavens led by a guardian king of the Buddhist Law alongside Brahma, and ingyeong was to announce the time to the 28 lunar mansions of the Sun and the Moon of the universe. Goryeo's capital, Gaegyeong also had its own bell tower, but it is un-

known whether the bell was struck to announce the opening and closing of the gates.

The gates were opened and closed by guards. In early Joseon, the gates of Sungnyemun, Heunginjimun, Donuimun, and Hyehwamun were overseen by the brigadier general (Hogun) of the Five Military Commands (Owi) while the rest were guarded by military officers of certain rank and infantrymen. After the Japanese invasion of 1592, the duty was transferred to the Three Armies Office.

To prevent burglary and fire, oversee the city gates and guards on post, and check the facilities, patrollers inspected the areas around the palaces and city walls. Called *sulla*, this activity of patrol was from which the term *sullae jabgi* (the game of hide and seek) originated. In early Joseon, an office of night patrol (*Suncheong*) was established and the Five Military Commands would send men to the office for patrol duty. After the Japanese invasion of 1592, however, the duty of city defense was transferred to the Three Armies Office and the duty of patrol was naturally passed onto the same Office, jointly shared by the capital police. This capital police was called the Agency for the Arrest of Thieves (*Podocheong*). The Agency, divided into two sections of *Jwa* and *Wu*, performed its nightly patrol duty and the Three Armies

Office sent patrollers on shift. These groups of patrollers were called pae and each group was comprised of one leader (paejang) and six to twelve patrollers. All patrollers were given a secret code and if patrollers who met each other on their nightly patrol did not say the correct password, it was seen as breaking the curfew, and they were punished accordingly.

At the signal of ingyeong, all males had to stay indoors within the walls. If any men were caught in the street in the hours after ingyeong, they were taken to a patrol post set up at crucial points of passage (gyeongsuso) and detained. After sunrise, they would be flogged. The number of floggings given depended on the time at which they had been found. Women, on the other hand, were allowed outdoors during the nocturnal hours. In King Sejong's times, circuit roads were built along the city walls, both in and out, for patrol. Soldiers would take these roads every day to ensure that the walls were in order. If something was out of ordinary, they reported it to the responsible office for repair.

At times when kings had to leave or enter the city, their choice of gate was chiefly Sungnyemun Gate, Heunginjimun Gate, or Donuimun Gate. In most cases, kings left the city to visit royal tombs and the city gate that they used depended on the location of tomb. In late Joseon era, kings

visited the East Nine Royal Tombs (Donggureung) more than any other destination, making Heunginjimun Gate one of the gates most frequently used by kings.

To welcome Chinese envoys, Donuimun Gate and Sungnyemun Gate were used. To hold rain rituals in the northern suburbs or to watch military drills in the east, Changuimun Gate and Hyehwamun were the gates chosen by kings. When foreign emissaries arrived, Chinese used Sungnyemun Gate and Donuimun Gate while the Jurchen passed through Hyehwamun Gate.

Large biers (daeyeo) used in state-funded funerals – held for those who had made great contributions to the kingdom – passed through Sungnyemun Gate, Heunginjimun Gate, or Donuimun Gate. Biers carrying the bodies of general government officials or the people could only go through Souimun Gate and Gwanghuimun Gate.

Supplies consumed in the city were sourced from outside. This meant that the city gates were frequently used by bull-drawn carriages. By the nineteenth century when commerce was vibrant in the city, carriages lined up in long queues outside Sungnyemun Gate and Heunginjimun Gate at dawn, waiting for the city to wake up and the gates to open.

The gates and adjacent areas also served as a venue for

state rituals. The government hosted rituals (yeongjae) in times of natural disasters, such as heavy rain and flood. These rituals were conventionally held at the four gates of the city – Sungnyemun Gate, Heunginjimun Gate, Donuimun Gate, and Sukjeongmun Gate – which was why those rituals were often referred to as the Four Gate Rituals (samun-yeongjae). When the weather was dry and drought prolonged, rain rituals were performed. For the occasion, Sukjeongmun Gate, which was usually kept closed, was opened while Sungnyemun Gate was kept closed.

On lunar New Year's Eve, an exorcism rite (narye) was held in the royal palace to drive away evil ghosts and spirits. The rite included an act by masked officials of chasing all noxious, evil energy from the court out of the city gates. At times when an uprising was quelled in the city, a ritual called heon-gwek-nye was held at the gate tower, offering up the severed heads of ringleaders to the king. Every spring and autumn, rituals would be held for the good fortune of the kingdom, at the shrines of Baegak (on the summit of the Baegak) and of Mokmyeok (on the summit of the Mokmyeok).

Restoring the Dignity of the Walls

The walls of Hanyang have not been used for military purposes, even once, until now. Even during the Japanese invasion of 1592 or the Manchu invasion of 1636, the kings immediately abandoned and escaped the city on hearing the news of approaching enemies. In truth, the walls were just a nuisance to ordinary people traveling in and out of the walled city. As centuries passed, the walls crumbled due to age, not because of war. Repairs began under King Sukjong, but the people resented rebuilding a structure that the king would abandon again in times of crisis.

King Yeongjo, the successor of King Gyeongjong and the son of King Sukjong by a concubine, also launched a massive construction project for the defense of the city, building

a fortress on Tanghundae Pavilion and a new garrison. King Sukjong had already built the Bukhansanseong Fortress for a physical defense system. However, to complete the system, it was necessary for King Yeongjo to mollify the citizens.

In 1751 (the 27th year of King Yeongjo's reign), the king himself wrote and released the 'Edict on the Protection of the Capital (Suseongyuneum),' proclaiming his resolve to safeguard the capital city.

With the Regulations on the Protection of the City still unreleased as of yet, how would the people in the capital city understand which borough falls under which garrison or which district falls under which region? (omitted)

The Edict is intended for the good of the people. They may now be exhausted; both in strength and in spirit, but the commitment to safeguarding the walls shall be judged by the heavens. If that were to be the case, I would myself put forth my strength to go up the walls and comfort the people.

If any unfounded argument were to undermine what is being safeguarded, it would equate to deceiving the hearts of the people as well as my own. How could I commit myself to such a deed? I produce and release this edict in

*right earnest as a token of good faith. How I adjure you,
my people, to understand my true intention!*⁶

The Edict was then followed by the ‘Regulations on the Protection of the City (Suseongjeolmok).’ The Three Armies Office – Military Training Command, Royal Guards Command, and Capital Garrison – was to be responsible for the patrol and repair of the city and walls and each community in the city would have their own unit of reserve troops under the supervision of the Office. In times of crisis, the people of Seoul were to run to the assigned section to defend the walls, shooting arrows or hurling rocks as weapons. By this, the system of people-driven capital defense was in place.



Life : Inside and Around

The Walls and Markets

Around the city walls, markets would open and close constantly, attracting goods for sustaining life inside. The city was more populous than any other place in the kingdom, serving as home to royal palaces, government offices, military garrisons, other government infrastructure and mansions of high-ranking officials. The capital was the greatest consumer, which was precisely why there were more goods and supplies traveling in and out through the city gates than there were people. In Joseon, there were two major transportation routes going to and from the capital: by river (Hangang River) and by land. Heavy and large items were mostly trans-

ported by river. Grain paid as tax and tributes to the king from Gyeonggi-do, Chungcheong-do, and Jeolla-do were moved to their nearest ports and shipped. Fully loaded, ships would then sail north along the western coast and moor at the island of Ganghwa-do. At high tide, ships would resume their travel and sail up at the mouth of the Hangang River. At the shore off Incheon, the tidal range was eleven meters, the power of which was leveraged to send ships up the river. Freight from Gyeongsang-do and Gangwon-do traveled by land routes and was temporarily stored at Gaheungchang Warehouse in Chungju or Heungwonchang Warehouse in Wonju, upstream of the Hangang River, and then transported to the capital by river. Once they reached the river points nearest to the capital, shipments were initially stored at large warehouses by the river, such as the Military Provisions Agency (Gunjagam), Surplus Storage Warehouse (Pungjeochang; a government office that oversaw the general finance of the central government), or Government Officials Salaries Warehouse (Gwangheungchang) before going into the city.

Inside the capital city, the population was approximately 100,000 in the earlier days of the Joseon Dynasty, which doubled by the later years of the Joseon Dynasty. The city needed to stock military and other supplies in order to sup-

ply to the population for several months in times of crisis. Warehouses were, therefore, critical. The city had many warehouses at the palaces, military garrisons, government offices and in residential areas. The largest of them all was the Sangpyeongchang Warehouse. Providing relief to the poor and controlling prices, this Warehouse had its origin in the relief loan law (jindaebeop) instituted by Goguryeo in the period of the Three Kingdoms. Centuries later in Goryeo, this responsibility was borne by the Relief Aid Agency (Sangpyeongbo). However, there were side-effects – abusing and taking advantage of government grain in storage. By the middle period of Goryeo, the warehouse system became titular. In 1409 (the 9th year of King Taejong's reign) when Joseon had just been established, and again in 1436 (the 18th year of King Sejong's reign), Jeolla-do Governor Hyang Yun and Chungcheong-do Governor In-Ji Jeong proposed the installation of Sangpyeongchang Warehouse, but the idea never came to pass due to the opposition by those who feared adverse effects. In 1458 (the 4th year of King Sejo's reign), Relief Officer for Three Southern Provinces (Hasamdodosunmun Jinh-yulsa), Myeong-Hoe Han, once again brought up the idea. Accordingly, governor of each province then conducted their own experiments with the system in one or two villages,

which officially became government offices pursuant to the *Great Compendium of Statecraft* (*Gyeonggukdaejeon*) published in King Seongjong's times.

In Joseon, Sangpyeongchang Warehouse was located in today's Namdaemun Market location, just inside the due-south gate of Sungnyemun which was the closest gate to the Hangang River. Because the job of Sangpyeongchang Warehouse was to sell government grain in the spring of a lean year and buy grain in the autumn, it was natural to see intermittent, seasonal grain transactions in the area. This was how the Sangpyeongchang Warehouse market came to be and it was later called the Namdaemun Morning Market (*josi*). With the advancement of commodity economy in the later Joseon period, the system of lending and recovering government grain was not practical anymore. In 1608 (the 41st year of King Seonjo's reign and Year of Enthronement for Prince Gwanghae), the Joseon government tentatively implemented the Uniform Land Tax Law (*Daedongbeop*), removed Sangpyeongchang Warehouse, and installed the Office for the Dispensation of Benevolence (*Seonhyecheong*). The Uniform Land Tax Law was a system by which farmers could pay their tributes – specifically designated local specialties – in the form of rice, cloth, or money and the Office for the Dis-

dispensation of Benevolence supervised the affairs. When the Office was opened, a new warehouse was built on the site of the old Sangpyeongchang Warehouse and the new warehouse was referred to as sinchang (new warehouse).

After Sangpyeongchang Warehouse became the location of the Office for the Dispensation of Benevolence, commodity trading, which had mushroomed from time to time in the adjacent areas, became even more vigorous. At the front of the warehouse of the Office were gatherings of tribute merchants who, having supplied local specialties to the royal house and governments in advance, came to collect their payments in rice, cloth, or money from the Office. Merchants who brought local products to the capital also came to the warehouse to wait for tribute middlemen. A boost in trading by the Office for the Dispensation of Benevolence encouraged farmers and villagers living outside the capital to bring vegetables, fruits, fish, meat, firewood, and other necessities. This change turned the morning market by the Office for the Dispensation of Benevolence into a semi-permanent market. By 1897, the market became permanent and still operates to this day. The market is today's famous Namdaemun Market.

While most tax grains or tributes traveled by river, there

was no need to travel long distance to secure large quantities of fresh produce, fish, food, or products at a cheap price (e.g., firewood). Such products could be directly brought in by farmers living near the capital or fishermen on the Hangang River. However, there were times when farmers and fishermen were inspected at the gates or when their products were not sold. In such cases, they would sell their products outside the gates or find trustworthy brokers to sell their products and return home. In the late seventeenth century, Chilpae Market emerged outside of Namdaemun Gate. This sizable marketplace usually handled grain and seafood. It was named Chilpae after the seventh squadron of the Royal Guards Command that patrolled the area since the times of King Yeongjo.

Alongside Jongnu and Ihyeon on the inside of Dongdaemun Gate, Chilpae Market was one of the three largest markets in the capital in the late eighteenth century. Chilpae Market was set up along the shortest route between the capital and Hangang River. Naturally, fish from Hangang River and seafood from the west sea flowed into Chilpae. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, citizens of Seoul were quite familiar with the fact that vegetables were best at Ihyeon Market inside Dongdaemun Gate and seafood was

best at Chilpae Market outside Namdaemun Gate (dongbuchae chilpaeo). After the Russo-Japanese War that erupted in 1904, the Japanese colonial government took full control and assumed authority to build railroads between Seoul and Busan/Sinuiju. The imperial government then forcibly expropriated land around Namdaemun Station (today's Seoul Station) and packed it with military facilities, railroads, amenities, and settlements for the Japanese. As a result, the trade of Chilpae Market was absorbed by Namdaemun Market.

Just inside of Heunginjimun Gate was another marketplace called Ihyeon (also known as Baeogae). In this area, there was also a large warehouse (built in King Sejo's times) that belonged to the Office of Supply (Saseomsi). It is likely that trade of some sort must have taken place near the warehouse. In early days of Joseon, a considerable number of Buddhist temples were located near Ihyeon. The number grew significantly over time and by the last years of King Sejo, there were complaints that these temples were weakening the energy of land. In 1470 (the 1st year of King Seongjong's reign), all temples in Ihyeon were demolished.¹⁷ After the Japanese invasion of 1592, a palace was built in Ihyeon for royal events or for residential requirements of royal relatives.

Ihyeon, with its landmark structure of Ihyeongung Pal-

ace, began to change after going through the ravages of two foreign aggressions. In 1652 (the 3rd year of King Hyojong's reign), the Royal Guards Command was restructured. Camps of the Royal Guards were set up outside Seoninmun Gate, Joyangmun Gate (the camp was called dongyeong), and Ihyeon (called sinyeong).¹⁸ Accordingly, Ihyeon and its surroundings became mass settlements for soldiers serving in the Military Training Command.¹⁹ In 1760 (the 36th year of King Yeongjo's reign) and 1773 (the 49th year of King Yeongjo's reign), when small riverbeds were dug out, the nature of land use and the composition of residents underwent significant changes. In the 1760 construction, Board of Revenue Minister (Hojo Panseo) Bong-Han Hong reasoned that the increase in the number of farmlands outside Dongdaemun Gate had led to flooding of streams. He petitioned that the farmland by streams could be converted for military use, to be supervised by the Royal Guards Command and could be lined with trees. His request was approved.²⁰ In April of the same year, shops were set up in Dongchon (near Dongdaemun Gate) to help residents.²¹ Ihyeon has served as the military settlements and new commercial districts ever since.

Advanced long-distance commerce between the capital and other regions was another factor that made Ihyeon and

its vicinity a crucial commercial center. Since the eighteenth century, Gaeseong, Suwon, Gwangju, Songpa, Yangju, and Nuwonjeom came into prominence as the new commercial hubs around Seoul and the local commerce in and around the capital related to these locations became more dynamic. The development of Nuwonjeom in particular was a great boost to the commercial development in Ihyeon. Nuwonjeom, a locality connecting Seoul and Wonsan, quickly grew into a trading center in the eighteenth century. In the mid-eighteenth century and afterwards, wholesale brokers (jungdoa) from Ihyeon would come to Nuwonjeom to buy seafood and other supplies in bulk and sell them to consumers.²² The fact that the area outside Dongdaemun Gate evolved into suburban farms that grew vegetables for sale since the mid-seventeenth century was another reason that the commerce of Ihyeon expanded. In early Joseon Dynasty, this area outside Dongdaemun Gate had been occupied by ranches attending to government horses for military, ceremonial, or transport purposes and many of them had to be closed after the Manchu invasion of 1636 due to Qing China's demand not to raise military horses. In addition to farmers who had lived there for generations after generations, refugees who had had to leave their homes that were

ravaged by two wars in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, came to where the horse ranches stood, tilled the land, and grew vegetables. Commercial farming thus expanded quickly, owing to the rapidly growing Seoul population since the two major foreign aggressions.

Thus, Baeogae Market emerged, with Ihyeon absorbing soldiers working for the capital city and their families. The government granted these soldiers some of the privileges accorded only to merchants operating in marketplaces, blurring the boundary between military and commerce. In the meantime, horse ranches outside Dongdaemun Gate were turned into vegetable farms while Nuwonjeom and other commercial hubs near Seoul grew and interacted with Ihyeon more actively than ever. Moreover, small rivers were dug out and developed, offering more solid residential areas to people living by Cheonggyecheon Stream near Dongdaemun Gate.

Like Chilpae Market outside of Namdaemun Gate, Baeogae Market, too, started out as a market that only opened at dawn. In 1905, Gwangjang Inc., inspired by Namdaemun Market, built a storehouse maintained by a manager in this location, paving the way for the birth of a modern permanent market. It is where today's Gwangjang Market operates.

The City Walls and Leisure

Now melded peacefully with four beautiful mountains surrounding the capital, the walls of Hanyang were popular destinations for fun games and literary and artistic activities. A walking tour along the walls extending for a 40-ri (one ri is approximately 400 meters) stretch was a favorite pastime for the people of Seoul, especially during the beautiful spring and summer months. This tradition was passed down to students who went on picnics to the city walls until the early twentieth century.

Around the city walls, were breathtaking attractions of mountains, rivers, and falls that beckoned groups of poets. Admirers of poetry would form a literary club, sing of stunning sceneries around the walls, and share poems and paintings with each other.

Archery competitions (pyeonsa) were another favorite sport and game of entertainment for the elite. Near the walls were Baekhojeong Pavilion, and Deungnyongjeong Pavilion on Inwangsan Mountain and Seokhojeong Pavilion on Namsan Mountain, built for archery competitions.

CHAPTER 3



Destruction and Destructive “Restoration”



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History Continues, and so Does Damage

Japanese Occupation and the City Walls Committee

To ancient walled cities, modernization means many things. It could be population growth and spatial expansion that bursts out of the walls' bounds, an emergence of new modes of transport, the construction and expansion of roads, or the development of new weapons and devalued military significance of the walls. The world has seen many of its old city walls torn down in the process of modernization and Hanyang City Wall also could not escape this fate. Seoul's modernization came hand in hand with foreign aggression.

From the mid-and late-nineteenth century, world powers began to show up on the coasts of Korea, with their heavily

armed ships, demanding trade. Joseon sought to reinforce its coastal and capital defense, revamp the capital city by rebuilding Gyeongbokgung Palace and Heunginjimun Gate, and elevate royal authority. However, after the Military Revolt of 1882 (Imo Gullan), the city began to see foreign troops stationed within their walls, which greatly undermined the military *raison d'être*. The government also adopted a military reform that resulted in disbanding the Three Armies Office and the maintenance of the city walls became increasingly lax.

In 1882, the city walls were opened to allow Chinese merchants in. In 1885, the capital opened its doors to traders from all the countries that signed treaties. The area from the foot of Namsan Mountain to the streams became Japanese and Chinese settlements while the Jeongdong district along the city walls stretching from Donuimun Gate to Souimun Gate became home to Westerners. The walled city quickly gave way to foreign consulates, religious and educational facilities, many of which were built adjacent to the walls or took stones from the walls as materials. One example was a Frenchman named Anton Preson who came to Seoul in 1901 and started a business of selling firewood and coal. He purchased a house near Seodaemun Gate from a Korean and

began to renovate it with stones taken from the walls. He received a corrective order from the Korean government.

The functions of the city walls saw a dramatic change in 1899 when trams were introduced to Seoul. At first, a railroad was laid between Jongno and Cheongnyangni, passing through Heunginjimun Gate. It was soon followed by more, going through Sungnyemun Gate and Donuimun Gate. When the railroads made it impossible to close the city gates, the curfew hours of *bara* and *ingyeong* that restricted the life of residents for hundreds of years were stopped. Instead, cannons were positioned at Changdeokgung Palace to fire *opo* to signal the hour of noon. Thus, the system of time changed from the concept of medieval times to the one of modern times.

Nonetheless, the walls were still maintained and protected by the state. Any attempts to damage or demolish the walls were strictly forbidden. In 1906, there was an incident where Jung-Yang Park, a county governor of Daegu, tore down the town walls and sold them to the Japanese as building materials. Park was accused and discredited severely, and King Gojong ordered that Park be strictly punished. It all came to naught, however, as Park was protected by Ito Hirobumi, a Japanese colonialist.

Immediately after the Russo-Japanese War broke out in 1904, the Japanese, having occupied Seoul, forced the Korea-Japan Protocol (Han-il uijeongseo) and the Protectorate Treaty Between Korea and Japan (Eulsa Neugyak) upon Korea, in a blatant attempt to take control of internal affairs of Korea. Japan took control of the right to restruct Seoul to make it easier to rule. It razed the old walls of Hanyang, gutted military facilities, built or widened roads, and erected new buildings. Everything Japan did was in order to exhibit its authority, enable its troops to mobilize quickly, and for the benefit of Japanese settlers.

By 1905, the Gyeongbu-Gyeongui railroads were completed and Namdaemun Station emerged as the hub station on the Korean peninsula. Hayashi Konske (林權助), a Japanese minister, sent an official letter to Ha-Yeong Lee, Korean Minister for Foreign Affairs (waebu daesin), demanding the demolition of the city walls around Namdaemun Gate and the construction of a new road as the traffic volume around Namdaemun Station was expected to surge. The Korean government responded to this demand in 1907. On March 30, 1907, Prime Minister from the Council of State Affairs (Uijeongbu chamjeong daesin) Je-Sun Park, Minister for the Interior (naebu daesin) Ji-Yong Lee, and Minister for Military

Affairs (gunbu daesin) Jung-Hyeon Gwon proposed to King Gojong as follows:

“Because Dongdaemun Gate and Namdaemun Gate are connected with main avenues of the imperial city, they are busy with people, carriages, and horses. Now that there are trams crossing the heart of thoroughfare, it is difficult for them to avoid each other and it increases the possibility of accidents. It is, therefore, necessary to seek special ways to facilitate transportation. By demolishing eight kans of low walls on either side of the gatehouse, we would have room to lay down rails. If people are allowed to pass only through designated gates, we would not suffer extreme confusion. We have brought with us a drawing for Your Majesty. We beseech Your Majesty to make a decision upon this matter.”²³

Having been reduced to a mere puppet at the time, King Gojong had no choice but to approve the plan drafted by the order of the Japanese Residency-General of Korea (Tonggambu). In June 1907, Premier (chongni daesin) Wan-Yong Lee, Minister for the Interior (naebu daesin) Seon-Jun Im, Minister for Finance (takjibu daesin) Yeong-Hee Go, and Minister for Military Affairs (gunbu daesin) Byeong-Mu Lee came forward with another demand: “Your Majesty has already approved the demolition of the walls on either side of the east gate-

house and the south gatehouse. The remaining sections of the city walls impede traffic as they are in the middle of the roads and are in no way beneficial to defending the city in times of crisis. Is it not better to show Your Majesty's boundless goodwill to instruct the Ministry of the Interior (naebu) and the Ministry of Finance (Takjibu; a central government office in charge of finance in the Empire of Korea) to take the responsibility of demolishing the walls?"²⁴ Again, King Gojong had to give consent. The approval was followed by a plan to demolish all city walls on the flat ground near roads, but could not be commenced immediately due to the prevailing circumstances and lack of resources.

On July 20, 1907, the Japanese colonial government used the secret dispatch of special emissaries to The Hague (*Heigeu Teuksa Sageon*) as a pretext to forcing King Gojong to relinquish his throne to his son, King Sunjong. Crown Prince Eun – King Gojong's seventh son and King Sunjong's half-brother – was appointed. To "congratulate" the new king, Japan decided to send a delegation led by the Japanese Imperial Crown Prince Gain with an ulterior motive to hold the Korean crown prince hostage, as Eun would have to pay a courtesy visit to Japan in return.

In the run-up to the Japanese crown prince's visit to Ko-

rea, the Japanese Residency-General made pro-Japanese Koreans organize a civic association in Hanseongbu and had them clean the entire city. Japanese military police and Korean police combed through each community for any infectious disease breakout. Anyone suspected was immediately isolated. A pond (namji) outside Namdaemun Gate and another one (yeonji) outside Dongdaemun Gate were filled to eliminate any potential hygiene issue. It is highly likely that the Japanese colonial government hastened to knock down the city walls in order to remove any elements of threat to the Japanese delegation. Seemingly, Japan worried that Korean soldiers or civilians could hide behind the city walls and shoot the visiting Japanese crown prince. On August 1, the day that the armed forces of the Empire of Korea were dissolved, the *Official Gazette (Gwanbo)* announced the Cabinet Directive #1 “On the City Walls Committee.”²⁵

Led by the City Walls Committee that had been organized as soon as the Directive was declared, the city walls were flattened methodically. A wide thoroughway encircling Namdaemun Gate was completed in early October, in 1907, shortly before the arrival of the Japanese crown prince. Before this, the walls on either side of Sungnyemun Gate had been torn down. Starting in March 1908, the City Walls

Committee commenced the demolition of the walls to the north of Heunginjimun Gate, the Five-arch Water Gate, and the walls to the south of Sungnyemun Gate. The Committee even hatched a plan to source the stones to Japanese as building materials.

Japan had won the Russo-Japanese War. It had paid a prohibitive price to win, but failed to receive a penny in reparations. Its claim on Korean territories was not something that could yield immediate profit. Trapped in a financial quagmire, the Japanese government tightened its belt, which led to an economic crisis and a shortage of jobs even for young Japanese with higher education. Tokyo encouraged its young unemployed citizens to go to Korea and find new jobs there. Young Japanese arrived in Korea in hordes. In addition, the Japanese government promoted farmers to migrate to Korea through its Oriental Development Company (Dongyang Cheoksik Jusik Hoesa) on the pretext of 'advising and improving farming in Korea,' which backfired and added more Japanese settlers in cities. With the aid of the Oriental Development Company that allowed the procurement of farmland at a price next to nothing, Japanese settlers chose to be absentee landlords (landlords who do not live in their property) and reap high rent profits instead of working on the farms

themselves.

Day after day, more and more Japanese moved to Seoul. Naturally, it led to an explosive growth of demands for buildings. This was the reason why the City Walls Committee schemed to sell stones taken from the demolition of the city walls. However, the plan was withdrawn, as the Japanese were concerned that selling off wall stones right after disbanding the Korean armed forces could incite the public unnecessarily. After dismantling 77 kans of city walls near Seosomun Gate and the same width of the walls near Namdaemun Gate, the City Walls Committee was closed in September 1908. The job of tearing down the rest of the city walls was handed over to the government bureaus overseeing local matters and civil engineering. At this point, the city walls located by major roadways, connecting the gates had already been removed. There was no longer any need to mobilize labor en masse.

Destruction and Inscription of Cultural Heritage by Colonial Japan

Having forcibly claimed the sovereignty over Korea in August 1910, Japan renamed the Prefecture of Hanseong as

Gyeongseongbu and placed the city under the jurisdiction of Gyeonggi-do. By doing so, Japan was robbing Hanseong of its capital status and demoting it to a mere regional city. By 1914, the locality of Yongsan outside the walls was included under Gyeongseongbu as the national administrative divisions were restructured. With this change, the function of the city walls and gates – setting the boundary – was disabled. That year, Souimun Gate was knocked down, followed by Donuimun Gate in 1915 and their gatehouses and stones were sold off as building materials. Other city gates were not intentionally torn down, but were left to fall into decay. By 1929, the gatehouse of Hyehwamun Gate collapsed. In 1938, even the foundation of Hyehwamun Gate was removed to make way for widened roads. It was also common to find ordinary people damaging the walls in the process of building their homes. In the meantime, Namdaemun Gate and Dongdaemun Gate remained in their place. Some explain that it was because these two gates had been used by Japanese generals Kato Kiyomasa and Konishi Yukinaga during the Japanese invasion of Korea in 1592. During the Japanese colonial rule of Korea, some Japanese, in fact, had demanded that signs be posted next to these gates to show that they were historical landmarks related to the Japa-

nese invasion.

The basic guiding principle that underpinned the Japanese colonial rule was to wipe out unique culture and traditions of Korea and to assimilate Koreans into Japan as second-class citizens. As part of the scheme, the Japanese Government General of Korea (Joseon Chongdokbu) attempted to bring in Japan's indigenous religion Sinto (神道) and let it pervade the minds of Koreans. Japan built the Korea Shrine and a walk of worship on Namsan Mountain, trampling the city walls nearby.

During the period, the walls that remained standing near Dongdaemun Gate were also decimated. Because of the naturally flat, low-lying topography, the vicinity of Heunginjimun Gate and Gwanghuimun Gate was more difficult to defend than other parts of the city gates and walls. It was in this area that the Bureau of Military Training (Hullyeonwon), a garrison under the Military Training Command (Hadogam), an office under the Military Training Command in charge of manufacturing gunpowder, and other such military facilities were concentrated. After the armed forces of Great Han Empire were forcibly dissolved in 1907, some of these military facilities were requisitioned by the Japanese. The yard that had once belonged to the Korean Bureau of Military Train-

ing was later used for big sports events by schools, textile associations, and such, paving the way for modern sports in Korea. The funerals of King Gojong and King Sunjong were held at the former site of the Bureau of Military Training. In 1926, Gyeongseongbu built the modern Gyeongseong Stadium on one corner of the Bureau of Military Training Park to celebrate the wedding of the Japanese crown prince. In the process, the remnants of walls between Heunginjimun Gate and Gwanghuimun Gate as well as the Double-arch Water Gate were razed down. The stones taken from the lower part of the walls were used to buttress the audience stands.

Another important reason behind the damage was the shortage of housing sites and the rising demand for houses, driven by Seoul's rapid population growth. Under the rule of the Joseon Dynasty, nothing could be built in the area that overlooked the palaces. It was against the generally accepted precept in Joseon society to be on a higher ground than the king was. Such principles, however, died when the dynasty fell. Before long, the poor began to build huts, without getting any approval, along the city walls on the four mountains encircling the capital. Soon the Japanese Government General of Korea split the plots of land and sold them as housing sites. It did not matter if it was inside or outside the

walls. Any land close to the walls became a site for someone's house, and these residents had no apprehensions about using the stones taken from the city walls as building materials.

At this point, all that remained of significance about the walls was its capacity, although vague, as 'boundary.' Even this was taken away in 1936 when Gyeongseongbu Station was expanded. Keen to turn Gyeongseong into a Japanese outpost to subjugate the Asian continent, the Japanese Government General of Korea prepared to respond to growing population by expanding Gyeongseongbu in 1936. The areas outside the old walls, Gangnam and Yeongdeungpo came under Gyeongseongbu while cemeteries in Itaewon, Sindangni, Miari, Ahyeonni, and Sinseolli, and their vicinities were developed as new housing sites. The roads leading out of the old city bounds were also broadened. As part of these actions, countless stones from the city walls were used in construction.

In the meantime, the Japanese Government General of Korea turned a blind eye to Japanese people stealing and selling off Korean cultural and historical artifacts. By the 1930s, the colonial government figured that its rule was stable and decided to preserve Korean cultural heritage if possible. On December 5, 1933, the Japanese Government General

of Korea promulgated the ‘Ordinance on the Preservation of the Treasures and Historical Relics of Joseon’ and designated 212 buildings – including Sungnyemun Gate and Heunginjimun Gate – and crafts as the treasures of Joseon. In 1936, the walls of Gyeongseong were added. The section on Namsan Mountain where the Korea Shrine was located was excluded from the list, not that there were any special measures taken to preserve the designated sections. After including the walls of Gyeongseong on the preservation list, the Japanese Government General of Korea was seemingly unchanged, taking the foundation and walls of Hyehwamun Gate apart. On their part, ordinary people also continued to inflict damage on the walls. Against all odds, Sungnyemun Gate, Heunginjimun Gate, and other remnants of the walled city survived and still hold their own as landmarks of Seoul, exuding their extraordinary beauty. Postcards or tour leaflets published during the Japanese colonial rule never failed to feature their photographs.

Damage After the Liberation

When Korea was liberated from Japan, it hit the country with a massive wave of migration. Around the time of libera-

tion, there were some 750,000 Japanese, excluding soldiers, on the Korean peninsula. The number of Japanese especially marked in Seoul, was approximately 250,000 out of the city's total population of 1.1 million. In a period of a year, these people returned to Japan.

The outflow was made up for by Koreans coming home from overseas. Around the time when Korea was about to be freed, some three million Koreans lived abroad, mostly in those areas temporarily occupied by imperial Japan following the Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War. About 2.5 million Koreans were estimated to be in Manchuria and Japan alone, not including those who lived on the southeastern coast of China and further inland. After the Pacific War, Koreans had been forced away from home to serve as soldiers or laborers in the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries.

As much as they were drawn to homeland out of love, they, in fact, could not survive in Japan or China any longer. Japan had already crashed financially long before and Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and their vicinity were simply uninhabitable due to the atomic bombing. The situation was so bad that even the Japanese were starving. There was no way that Koreans – migrants from a colony – could scrape together a

living. In the meantime, the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) of China decided to send all Koreans in China back home after Korea regained its independence on August 15. In the former land of the State of Manchuria, Koreans were expelled as, in Manchuria and north China, Koreans were regarded as informants for the Japanese. If they wanted to survive, Koreans saw no other option but to return home.

Until late 1946, 1.3 million returned to Korea from Japan, 900,000 from China, and 30,000 from the islands of the South Pacific. In a matter of a year since the liberation, Korea saw an increase in its population by a tenth. Those who returned by sea could be counted but those who walked from Manchuria and arrived on foot could not even be reckoned.

Departing from Manchuria and trudging through North Korea across the 38th Parallel all the way to South Korea, Koreans barely ate or had any opportunity to wash. All they could do was to walk for months on end, until they reached their homeland.

Quite a few of them, however, never reached their hometown. Those who had been forced away were welcomed by their family and comforted by neighbors, but those who had left in secret were not. They would wander where the roads

led them. When they found a suitable place, they stayed. Seoul abounded with such war refugees who wrangled with each other over houses left behind by Japanese settlers, often squeezing themselves into one and living with other families under one roof. Each day, dozens died in deprivation and illness from enduring hardships on their journey home.

Seoul still attracted many people, even farmers from rural villages and businessmen and traders from small towns. Hundreds of thousands of 'quality' jobs left behind by the Japanese beckoned those who were ambitious at heart. Seoul was a place where it was commonplace to see a manager become a director, or a driver turn out to be a leader of a factory. Anticipation and desire to be elevated in one's status exploded everywhere, and each worked in their own ways to make their dream come true.

In early 1946, the influx of population was accelerated by those coming from North Korea across the 38th Parallel for political reasons. As of March 1947, a daily average of 1,500 people came south. That year, it was found that more than half a million had headed south. The increase in the number of war refugees did not stop there. When the government of the Republic of Korea was founded, the military and police forces carried out tactical plans to put down riots by

the left wing and guerilla activities. Until early 1950, some 790,000 refugees – approximately 150,000 households – were displaced across the country, particularly in Jeju island, Yeosu, and, Suncheon areas. Of these, 600,000 people (about 110,000 households) were local residents in remote mountain villages where guerillas were violently dealt with. The government was afraid that these people could be misled by guerilla propagandas and leave the country. So, it prevented them from going home, but failed to support them. To the south of the 38th Parallel, there were hundreds of thousands of people without a home.

In less than a year after the Korean independence, Seoul's population changed drastically with more than 30 percent of the people from out of town. It became increasingly easy to see people roving about in search of a place to sleep. Some even dug a hole in the ground to live. Temporary shelters were hastily put up to accommodate refugees, but they were far from sufficient. In vain, the military government and social organizations launched campaigns to urge people to share nonessential facilities such as high-end restaurants (yo-jeong) with refugees. With nowhere to go, refugees were left to dig into mountains and build huts, further weakening the city walls.

As if that were not enough, the old walls of Hanyang were once again gutted during the Korean War. The walls on Namsan Mountain near Seoul Station were pulverized during major bombings by the United Nations Forces, thereby dealing a terrible blow to Namdaemun Gate. The walls in other sections were no less damaged by bullets and blasts during the conquest of Seoul. The job of investigating the extent of damage done to government offices, civilians, businesses, and factories was onerous enough. Considering the prevailing situation at that time, it was sheer luxury to accord attention to identifying the damage to the walls.

Seoul's population, which had plummeted during the war, rebounded quickly afterwards. The war had produced a massive number of refugees heading south and anti-Communist prisoners of war joined those suspected of conspiring with leftists on their journey to the capital. The introduction of PL480 (Public Law 480), too, did not help. The American food aid program pushed the prices of grain down and kept them there, prompting an irrevocable wave of migration from farms to cities from the mid-1950s onwards. Like their predecessors, most of these migrants who left home to come to Seoul without any specific plan once again flocked to Cheonggyecheon Stream or the four mountains around the

capital to live in their hand-built huts. To many, the rocks taken from the walls were nothing more than easily accessible construction materials. It was not just their careless behavior but also the indifference shown by academic institutions and government organizations that ultimately caused the historic city walls to fall into ruin.

In 1955, Gyeongshin High School has built a new site in Hyehwa-dong and Seongbuk-dong. In doing so, however, it sourced the materials of its foundation from the adjacent city walls and faced a barrage of criticism.

*Controversy is raging over the construction of a new building for Gyeongshin Middle and High School. It was found that the school laid the foundation with stones taken from the old city walls, the historical relics currently under protection... Designated by the government for protection and preservation of historical heritage, this time-honored site was gutted like a common quarry and thus neglected by the relevant authorities. Moreover, the site is a forest protected by the government for preservation.*²⁶

To this day, Gyeongshin High School's foundation is one

of the examples that show how the integrity of the city walls of Hanyang was impaired.

After the May Sixteenth Military Coup (O-illyuk Gungsa Jeongbyeon), Korea's Cultural Property Protection Law was finally enacted in January of 1962. Accordingly, treasures, historical relics, and scenic sites designated by the Japanese colonial government were re-categorized into three, namely National Treasures, Treasures, and Historic Sites, each assigned a maintenance number according to its location. Namdaemun Gate, the south gate was listed as National Treasure No. 1 and Dongdaemun Gate, the east gate as Treasure No. 1 initially, but it was not until January of 1963, a whole year later, that the remaining sections of the walls were designated as Historic Site No. 10. At the time, the city walls were officially called the 'Seoul Wall.'

Taking such action to designate the walls as cultural heritage did not change the government's indifference toward preservation. In 1963 and 1964, the government widened the road going from Jangchungdan through Hannam-dong to Hangang River, and built Jayu Center and Tower Hotel near the old site of Namsomun Gate. While the road was paved, the natural terrains on which the walls had stood were seriously damaged, and a shocking number of wall

stones were used to support Jayu Center. Even today, the foundation of Jayu Center reveals the names of the sections and districts inscribed during the renovation under King Sejong.

In 1975, it was time for Toegye-ro to be widened. In the process, Gwanghuimun Gate was rebuilt. It was moved 15 meters to the south from its original location. Seoul had a plan, since the mid-1960s, to remove what was left of Gwanghuimun Gate – a tower – but could not touch it as the public had insisted that cultural heritage must be preserved. However, the gate was removed from its original location as part of the “restoration” efforts when the ‘Seoul Wall Restoration Project’ was later launched by the directive of the President in 1974.

Authenticity and Integrity of Restoration

After Korea attained freedom from Japan's colonial rule, its very first city wall restoration project began with the repair of Namdaemun Gate which was devastated by bombings in the war. In the spring of 1953, immediately before the cease-fire, the government sent an advance contingent to Seoul for post-war rehabilitation, restored the gatehouse, and did traditional decorative coloring (dancheong) of Sungnyemun Gate. The government, however, could not spare any more resources to fix the entire walls. Some of the sections to the left of Changuimun Gate and the stone foundations to the north of Inwangsan Mountain were mended in 1961 and 1972 respectively, but the restored walls were shorter than those sections, serving as the boundaries of numerous

homes.

On January 21, 1968, a North Korean special forces team infiltrated into the Baegaksan Mountain near the blue-roofed President's official residence. In the incident, the walls of Hanyang proved its worth as a defensive system and the walls and the areas on the mountains of Baegaksan and Inwangsan in their vicinity soon were off-limits to civilians and become military installations. Once again, the process of installing sentry posts around the walls and building air defense facilities inflicted damage.

Even after being designated as a cultural heritage, the government had continued to disfigure the walls on the pretext of improving transportation, responding to military exigencies, or building ideological icons. The government then did a volte-face to pursue restoration in 1972 after the Yusin (Restoration) Constitution (Yusin Heonbeop) had been adopted. Advocating 'full-scale national security,' the Yusin regime was a framework for full military mobilization, designed so that the entire population could be organized by a military structure into groups such as the National Student Defense Corps (Hakdo Hogukdan), Homeland Reserve Forces (Hyangto Yebigun), or civil defense militia (minbangwi-dae). The regime wanted the military culture characterized

by ‘top-down chain of command and subordination’ and ‘strict order’ to pervade the entire country. To justify his creation, the Chung-Hee Park administration continually reminded Koreans that the Korean peninsula was at war and that they must arm themselves and be trained in martial arts. He then presented the famous admiral Sun-Sin Yi as the national hero and a role model who lived true to his martial spirit. This was followed by restorative works on military-related relics and sites, which would later be used to edify the public.

By late 1974, then-president Park decided to move and mend Gwanghuimun Gate. Alongside this activity, according to his orders, “The Seoul Wall also had to be restored to educate the people so they may learn from their ancestors what it is like to defend the homeland.” Conforming to this, Seoul organized the ‘Seoul City Walls Restoration Task Force (SCWR Task Force)’ and the ‘Seoul City Walls Restoration Committee (Restoration Committee)’ in April 1975 to embark on the project of city wall restoration in earnest. To open the way for the SCWR Task Force, some officials working for the Bureau of Cultural Property Preservation changed their affiliation to the city government of Seoul. The Restoration Committee was made up of the Cultural Heritage Commit-

tee members and other experts. The survey of the walls was performed by Samsung Architects.

The survey indicated that the walls measured at 18,127 meters in total length and of this, 6,703 meters had been obliterated and 11,424 meters were damaged. It was decided that the 10.88-kilometer stretch be restored to its old glory. This section of the old city walls was divided into eight segments and for each segment, contractors were selected.

From this April to late 1976, the city of Seoul decided to spend KRW 1,385,790,000 to restore the 10.88-kilometer section of the old city walls. The project will also dismantle and restore the gatehouses and stone foundations of Gwanghuimun Gate and Sukcheongmun Gate. Designed to preserve the increasingly dilapidated city walls, this grand restoration plan is one of a kind and there has been nothing like it since the times of King Sukjong, the nineteenth monarch of Joseon. Encircling the city of Seoul are the ancient city walls, stretching the length of 18.127 kilometers in decay. Of this, 7.247 kilometers have no trace at all, and only the rest – 10.88 kilometers – survives today. Restoration will begin on partially severed or damaged segments in eight districts of Gwanghui, Cheon-

gun, Samcheong, Jangchung, Namsan, Samseon, Seongbuk, and Dongsung. All buildings that are contiguous with the city walls and are affected during the demolition will be compensated suitably. In 1975, Seoul's initial plan is to dismantle and restore the gatehouse and foundation of Gwanghuimun Gate and renovate the 4.65-kilometer section in Samcheong and Cheongun. Only the arched door hongye remains of Sukcheongmun Gate at the foot of Bugaksan Mountain, and this too will be included in the project. As soon as the walls are restored and unauthorized buildings are removed, the city will turn the land into green space for citizens to use as their new hiking trails.²⁷

At the time of setting up the SCWR Task Force, the city walls of Hanyang were in a dilapidated state and even in those sections that were relatively intact, battlements had collapsed completely and only the ramparts remained standing. The SCWR Task Force worked with experts and concluded that the historical reference point for restoration would be set in the early eighteenth century, under King Sukjong. Under the king, the ramparts had been built with 45 centimeter by 45 centimeter quadrates while

the battlements used two-to-one width-length stones. In keeping with the changes in weaponry that followed the Japanese invasion of 1592, the walls built at the time had been equipped with short/long-range embrasures, covered with roof stones. Originally, this was what the SCWR Task Force and the Restoration Committee had in mind for their ‘restoration.’²⁸ However, the plan did not work out due to a number of reasons:

First, they lacked resources and time. It was just not feasible to restore the walls extending over ten kilometers with KRW 1.38 billion in a mere two years. Even the commandeering, authoritarian Yusin regime had trouble accelerating the demolition of unauthorized houses by the walls. Delay in schedule and increase in construction cost were inevitable. Many contractors that had successfully bid for the project went bankrupt and backed out. The contractors that replaced their predecessors did not conform to the guidelines set by the SCWR Task Force due to the cost issue. Concrete was, therefore, used in place of broken stones to reinforce the walls. The guideline that mandated the use of lime in battlements was hardly complied with.

Second, they had an issue with sourcing rocks. Due to the rapid urbanization in the 1960s and 1970s, quarries near the

city walls had been converted into housing sites. Granite – the material used to build the old walls of Hanyang – was usually extracted from Pocheon, which was too far and costly to process and transport rocks as had been done in King Sukjong's times. At the instruction of the Mayor of Seoul, the SCWR Task Force decided to use the rocks excavated from the Namsan Mountain tunnel construction. They assumed, without any research, that the old walls had been built with rocks sourced in Seoul and thought that it would be in keeping with the integrity of restoration to use rocks extracted from Namsan Mountain. The rocks from Namsan Mountain, however, were byproducts of blast and thus could not immediately be matched to the size of those used in King Sukjong's times. For this reason, the walls in Namsan Mountain, especially their battlements, varied greatly from the original.

The initial plan to wrap up the work by late 1976 was delayed due to insufficient budget and demolition of unauthorized houses by the walls. Only the 2,570-meter long section in Samcheong was completed on schedule. The rest were completed between 1976 and 1981. The assassination of President Park on October 26, 1979 and the subsequent social and political confusion were another major reason

City Wall Restoration in 1975 – 1981

District	Section	Length	Description	Period
Samcheong	Changuimun Gate – Sukjeongmun Gate	2,570m	1,994m (wall), 1,403m (battlement), Sukjeongmun Gate	Sep. 18, 1975 – Oct. 21, 1976
Seongbuk	Sukjeongmun Gate – Hyehwamun Gate	1,429m		Oct. 4, 1976 – March 20, 1978
Samseon	Hyehwamun Gate – Heunginjimun Gate	1,037m	1,037m (wall), 1,033m (battlement)	Jun. 1, 1979 – Aug. 12, 1980
Dongsung	Hyehwamun Gate – Heunginjimun Gate	1,051m	Initial: 543m	Sep. 30, 1980 – Aug. 1, 1981
			Secondary: 508m (wall), 520.5m (battlement)	Sep. 9, 1981 – Jun. 16, 1982
Gwanghui	South of Gwanghuimun Gate		25.6m (battlement), 60m (drain)	Nov. 22, 1976 – Feb. 28, 1977
Jangchung	Jangchung Stadium – East of Namsan Mountain	1,053m	Wall/battlement	Oct. 4, 1977 – Dec. 31, 1978
Namsan	East – West of Namsan Mountain	1,639m	Wall/battlement	
Cheongun	North of Donuimun Gate – Changuimun Gate	1,626m	District 1 – 203.5m (wall/battlement)	Dec. 26, 1977 – Jul. 15, 1978
			District 2 – 1,242.5m (wall/battlement)	Apr. 12, 1978 – Jun. 30, 1979
			District 3 – 120m (wall/battlement)	Jul. 1, 1979 – Apr. 30, 1980

for the delay. The restoration works performed on the total length of 9,764 meters between 1975 and 1981 are summarized in the table in page 134:

Under the city's SCWR Task Force, restoration works were carried out on the 508-meter section from Hyehwamun Gate to Heunginjimun Gate (secondary work in Dongsung District) and the 520.5-meter battlement in August 1982. In the years that followed, the city walls, as the official historic site, entered into the management by the Bureau of Cultural Property Preservation (elevated to Cultural Heritage Administration in May 1999). No further restoration works were carried out for some time.

The restoration works recommenced later in 1994 when Seoul celebrated its 600th anniversary as the capital city. Prior to this, the city of Seoul had launched a project called 'Recovery of Namsan Mountain' in 1990 to revive the ecosystem as well as historical and cultural resources of the mountain. The '100 Citizen Committee for the Recovery of Namsan Mountain' was then set up to involve citizens and experts for their insight on the project. Based on the discussions by the Committee, four guiding principles were established in October 1990: 1) move or demolish the facilities taking over Namsan Mountain and open a park; 2) restore

the ecosystem of Namsan Mountain; 3) restore the historic beacon mound and city walls; and 4) restrict irresponsible development and build hiking trails in the mountain.

Pursuant to the guideline, the Namsan Beacon Mound (Namsan Bongsudai) was restored and the Foreigners Apartment was knocked down in 1994. At the site of Capital Defense Command, Seoul Millennium Time Capsule was buried. In 1996, the Capital Defense Command was relocated, and the site was taken by the Namsan Traditional Hanok Village.

These commemorative projects were designed to celebrate Seoul's 600 years as the capital of Korea, but they also re-kindled public curiosity in Seoul's ancient history and past and attracted scholarly interest in the space and culture provided by Seoul. In the meantime, restoration works were underway in two sections of the walls. In late 1992, the city began working on Hyehwamun Gate and the 70.2-meter stretch to the northwest of the gate, completing in August 1994. Approximately 7.5 meters tall, the walls were built on the old foundation stones, and other damaged segments were repaired with rocks extracted from Hwangdeungmyeon, Iksan-gun, and Jeollabuk-do.²⁹ The original site of Hyehwamun Gate had been paved and converted into an

eight-lane road. The gate had to be moved thirteen meters to the northwest, restored based on photographs and other references.

In November 1993, the Land Development Corporation commenced the restoration works of the walls in Namsan Mountain. The construction was completed in June 1994. The restored segment was four to six meters in height and 91 meters in length, running from the roadside of Toegyero-2-ga all the way to Hilton Hotel.³⁰ Of the city wall's total length of 18,127 meters, 9,956 meters (55 percent) recovered its old self and glory. Seoul concluded that the 3.5-kilometer stretch in the destroyed and lost section was beyond restoration, and the 4.6-kilometer segment with military installations was marked out for a long-term review.

The celebration of Seoul and its 600-year history left a profound imprint in the mind of the public. Coupled by the contemporary tragedies such as the collapse of Seongsu Bridge (1994) and Samping Department Store (1995), it affected the general psyche of Koreans, urging them to scrutinize their past, particularly the nationwide 'development-first' obsession that had grown in intensity in the last three decades since the 1960s.

Then in 1997 came the Asian financial crisis, which many

citizens and experts expected to herald the end of the development-first era. Now the focus was on reconciling development and preservation and switching from development to preservation. People began to talk about life that attained a balance between history, culture, and nature, frequently in association with the recovery of humanity. It was during this time that the expressions 'quality of life' and 'wellness' became popular.

Thanks to growing public interests in cultural heritage, the city wall projects that were put on hold after the 1994 restoration of Hyehwamun Gate regained its momentum. It began with the demolition of Naksan Apartment in 1998 which was replaced with a park. This was based on Seoul's Recovery of Namsan Mountain project back in 1994 and was widely supported by citizens who wished to see their city recover its glorious past.

The park construction was finished in 2002 and citizens now had a 1.2-kilometer trail along the walls to enjoy their walks through the rich history. The new Naksan Park completed a green ring of urban space connecting the mountains of Inwangsan, Baegaksan, and Naksan.

In July 2002, Myung-Bak Lee, who had previously promised to restore the Cheonggyecheon Stream, was elected the

mayor of Seoul. In the inaugural speech, he pledged to end the era of development and switch to the one focused on history, culture, and environment, thereby marking a turning point in the general approach to urban space.

As soon as the new mayor came to office, the ‘Cheonggyecheon Stream Restoration Headquarters’ were installed at the city government. The new organization had three objectives; 1) restore the natural ecosystem and improve quality of life; 2) restore historical and cultural heritage; 3) boost economy. As it turned out, the Cheonggyecheon Stream project fell short of its goals in the aspects of environment and history/culture, but it did mark a change in the attitude and interest shown by the public with regard to rediscovering Seoul’s historical past. The old walls, being the key features of the old Seoul, once again received much attention. In December 2002, when the restoration works of Cheonggyecheon Stream were still underway, the Jung-gu District Government announced its decision to spend KRW 1.38 billion to restore the old walls near Gwanghuimun Gate.³¹ Half a year later, in June 2003, Seoul made another decision to finish the 2,520-meter section of the walls which was yet to be completed. The section included a 1,500-meter segment below Changuimun Gate near Inwangsan Moun-

tain, a 945-meter segment beyond Hyehwamun Gate and a 75-meter stretch by Gwanghuimun Gate. Cheonggyecheon Stream flows through the Five-arch Water Gate located between Heunginjimun Gate and Gwanghuimun Gate and then out of the walled city. If this stream running through the capital were to be restored, the walls in the corresponding sections had to be repaired as well. The city of Seoul attempted to restore the walls near Gwanghuimun Gate in association with the restoration of the Five-arch Water Gate, but the latter did not happen.³²

For what it's worth, such developments were instrumental to sowing the seeds of belief that the recovery of historic sites was indeed a prerequisite to upholding the identity of Seoul and that the identity of a city was a key component to making a city competitive. It was only natural that the restoration of Cheonggyecheon Stream and its bridges was followed by the discussion on the gatehouses and walls of the old city. After he took office, Mayor Myung-Bak Lee did review the Donuimun Gate project. Concluding that it would be unfeasible to finish it before the end of his term, he included it on the list of mid-to long-term projects. In mid-2005, when the Cheonggyecheon Stream project was about to be completed, the topic was brought up again.

This time, suggestions came forward, such as moving the road passing through Seodaemun Gate underground or re-vamping the traffic infrastructure near the gate. However, no conclusion was reached in the end.

By May 2005, the traffic system near Sungnyemun Gate was restructured and a public square was opened. That September, the central government announced that it would open the paths near Sukjeongmun Gate that were banned since the North Korean raid on the Blue House. Hiking trails were set up in the Baegak section of the city walls in April of the following year.

In December 2005, Seoul decided to restore the 700-meter stretch from Sajik Tunnel to Donuimun Gate that had been lost.³³ It was not until September 2011 that the construction was completed. At this point, guiding principles had not been fully defined with regard to the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage. As a result, rocks used to build the lost walls were cut and processed mechanically to standard sizes, thereby compromising on authenticity and integrity.

In November 2006, the Jung-gu District Government made public its decision to restore the walls on either side of Sungnyemun Gate which had been torn down in 1907. The

gatehouse of Sungnyemun Gate was, however, burned down in February 2008, and the plan had to be included in the reconstruction project, which was completed only in 2013. This, too, was against the UNESCO guidelines that the same materials and techniques should be used in the restoration works.

On October 21, 2009, when the reconstruction and repair of Sungnyemun Gate was well underway, Seoul came up with its 'Mid-to Long-Term Master Plan on the Seoul Wall.' Its goals were to restore and return Donuimun Gate to its original location by 2013 and to rebuild seven sections (2,175 meters long) of the lost walls, including 83 meters in Inwangsan Mountain, 753 meters in Namsan Mountain, and 263 meters near the old Dongdaemun Stadium. The plan was closely related to the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA)'s plan to get the center of Seoul selected for the UNESCO's 'World Heritage Cities' list. Even at this point, city wall restoration works had been far removed from UNESCO's guiding principles that emphasize authenticity and integrity of cultural heritage.

Many experts pointed out that the 'restoration' project of the old walls of Hanyang, underway for more than 30 years since 1975, was, in fact, destructive restoration. In order to

make the Hanyang walls a heritage for the world to cherish, Seoul needed to reassess the vision and practicality of its restoration projects.



CHAPTER 4



Old City Walls: A Boon for Seoul



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Seoul into a World Heritage City

On January 24, 2006, the Cultural Heritage Administration put forward its ‘Seoul World Heritage City Plan,’ which was mainly centered around dismantling and restoring Gwanghwamun Gate and woldae platform. The other key area of this plan was to designate and manage the old walls of Hanyang as a historic site and tourist attraction.³⁴ The plan also included a move to have the part of town within the old walls listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. For this to happen, entire sections of the walls had to be restored. What this meant was the plan would entail restoring the old walls and inscribing that part of the town – royal palaces, Jongmyo Shrine, and other areas within the bounds of the walls – as a ‘World Heritage City’ with the UNESCO

World Heritage Committee.³⁵ Before the plan was devised, Gyeongju had been inscribed as the Gyeongju Historic Areas by UNESCO, but the idea of turning the megalopolis into a 'Heritage City' was soon embroiled in controversy.

If indeed that were to happen, it was highly likely that that part of Seoul would be a historic center like Rome or Prague. However, there were voices claiming that the historical sites of Hanseong Baekje in Pungnap-dong and Seokchon-dong were equally worthy to be a World Heritage Site. Others criticized that ancient roads and sites in Seoul's urban center had already been profoundly damaged and that the dense concentration of high-rise buildings rendered the plan unlikely. Even if it were likely, some argued, urban development would be restricted once the town made it onto the UNESCO World Heritage List, significantly undermining the property rights of citizens. They said it was unreasonable for the Cultural Heritage Administration to pursue this plan.

Indeed, inscribing the old Hanyang walls as the World Heritage had too many restrictions and issues.

Firstly, the 30-year-long restoration of the walls since 1975 was not in compliance with UNESCO's standards. The walls did not use the same materials and techniques used

when they had been originally built. When Hyehwamun Gate and Gwanghuimun Gate were reconstructed, they were not even restored to their original location. Moreover, works had been done without sufficient research. In some sections, concrete had been used. Special care had to be taken in order to prevent damage to other relics and the restored parts should have been made distinguishable from the original by using different materials. However, the Double-arch Water Gate (Igansumun Floodgate) or the walls in the Woram Park section, for example, had mechanically cut rocks on top of the original rocks. This was an outright compromise of ‘authenticity’, one of the most crucial requirements to getting selected as a World Heritage Site.

Secondly, policies had not been established to set up buffer zones and preserve cultural heritage before restoration. To the contrary, policies that had been developed and implemented were retrograde and were detrimental to the conservation of the historic sites. Between 2002 and 2006, during the term of the former Mayor Myung-Bak Lee, the New Town Program was introduced with an aim to redevelop the low-rise residential area near the city walls into a high-rise apartment complex. If the program were to be implemented as planned, it would be a fatal blow to the ‘Outstanding

Universal Value' of the city walls. The next mayor of Seoul, Se-Hun Oh, who also championed the selection of the walls as a World Heritage Site, approved the construction of high-rise apartments and commercial buildings, thereby adopting policies that were diametrically opposed to UNESCO's World Heritage guidelines.



Changes to the City Walls

Maintenance System

In July 2011, the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) changed the name from ‘Seoul Wall’ to ‘Hanyang City Wall in Seoul’ in an attempt to ensure consistency in the names of towns, mountains and such fortifications and walls across the country. Some criticized that the new name had three words – Seoul, Hanyang, and City Wall – which essentially mean the same and was, therefore, not suitable. However, it effectively represented the special status of the wall that surrounded the capital. This English name given by the CHA – Hanyang City Wall in Seoul – was later changed to ‘Hanyangdoseong, the Seoul City Wall’ by the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) in February 2016.

On January 31, 2012, three months after inauguration,

Seoul Mayor Won-Soon Park travelled the entire 18 kilometers of the city walls with six experts, including the head of the CHA World Heritage subcommittee, the President of ICOMOS Korea, other high-ranking SMG officials, and members of the Seoul Metropolitan Council. “While it is important to put the city walls on the UNESCO World Heritage List, it is equally significant to make the walls a popular attraction that is truly loved and enjoyed by both the citizens and the inbound tourists. We need to maintain the walls as best as we can, restoring those sections to their original condition where possible and doing our best for the upkeep of those sections where restoration is not feasible,” the mayor said. “We plan to constitute a committee comprised of experts and citizens to revive the entire 18 kilometers of the walls as well as bits of collective memory. For this dream job, we are going to create a project group,” he added. With regard to the concentration of high-rise buildings near the walls, he stressed the significance of “dignified urban planning that respects the surrounding nature, environment, history, and culture” and pledged to move the mayoral office in Hyehwa-dong that is located on the walls for the sake of the integrity of restoration.³⁶

This statement by the mayor was a prelude to the transfor-

mation of the existing approach that regarded the city walls as a singular unit of cultural heritage in a linear structure and had dictated the maintenance and restoration accordingly. Mayor Park mentioned on numerous occasions that Seoul's landmark is its city walls. To preserve and exhibit the historic landmark as he promised, it was vital to change the attitude toward it altogether, to view the walls as a structure, in the context of history and environment while also merging it with the city's urban environment and cityscape.

On February 7, 2012, a week after Mayor Park's on-site tour, an experts meeting was held to discuss the issues and improvements to the maintenance and restoration of the walls. It was agreed that the system of conserving, maintaining, and using the city walls should be in line with universal standards. Based on this conclusion, a number of action plans were developed:

- i) set up a master plan for the conservation and maintenance of the city walls;
- ii) move military installations that compromise the maintenance of the city walls;
- iii) redesign and tend the greeneries around the walls;
- iv) develop urban and housing plans to improve the

- skyline near the walls;
- v) engage civic groups and organizations in the maintenance and use of the walls;
 - vi) organize an expert advisory group and a committed project group;
 - vii) and establish a city wall research center and build a museum.³⁷

Until a team was set up to commit to the walls and relevant affairs, the department of cultural heritage temporarily took charge and finalized policies across each sector, adhering to a general roadmap. On May 7, 2012, such decisions were added to ‘Comprehensive Plan on the Restoration, Maintenance, and Use of the Seoul City Walls’ and were announced to the press.

Directorate for Hanyang City Walls and Hanyang City Walls Advisory Committee

Pursuant to the ‘Comprehensive Plan on the Restoration, Maintenance, and Use of the Seoul City Walls’ (referred to as the ‘Comprehensive Plan’ hereinafter), the Directorate for Hanyang City Walls (Hanyangdoseong Dogam) was constituted

newly on September 28 of that same year as the organization committed to the matters of the city walls. ‘Dogam,’ which can be translated as a directorate, was a name given to temporary organizations founded to pursue particular projects in the Joseon Dynasty. The modern city of Seoul took the name from the old dynastic government because it aimed to emphasize the historical significance of preserving the city walls of Hanyang and to put the walls on the list of UNESCO World Heritage.

The objective of the Directorate was to conduct systematic research and study of the city walls of Hanyang and to preserve and maintain the walls to ensure that it benefits not only the current generations but also the future ones, thereby helping Seoul to join the ranks of the world’s most respected historical and cultural cities. To achieve the goal, the Directorate need to perform five responsibilities as follows:

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- Secure evidence to prove the authenticity, integrity, and Outstanding Universal Value as required to be listed as UNESCO World Heritage.
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- Prepare evidence of an administrative system that manages the preservation and maintenance of cultural heritage.
 - Conduct periodic maintenance on the city walls and establish/ implement restoration plans.
 - Work with other departments so that urban plans and rehabilitation projects will be carried out, taking the city walls into account.
 - Promote the walls both at home and abroad and collect stories and content resources on the walls.
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The founding of the Directorate not only accelerated the process of UNESCO World Heritage inscription but also supported the integration of all the city wall related jobs and responsibilities into one. In addition, it became commonplace to take the walls into consideration while working on the city's physical improvement projects.

As a part of its preparations for the inscription, the Directorate commissioned scholarly research and study – first with the Development of the Master Plan for the Preservation, Maintenance, and Use of the Seoul City Walls for the UNESCO World Heritage Inscription' (2013) followed by the 'Preparation and Application for the UNESCO World Heritage Inscription of the Seoul City Walls' (2014). The Di-

rectorate also worked closely with the Hanyang City Walls Advisory Committee for a more meticulous approach to the preservation and maintenance of the walls.

After the Directorate was founded, one of the most prominent changes made to Seoul's maintenance of the city walls was the discretionary use of the term 'restoration' which by then had been used without much thought applied to it. In addition, the city started to focus keenly on the authenticity of cultural heritage so that it was in line with UNESCO's standards. The first and foremost focus was on the conservation of the city walls for 'authenticity' while conducting in-depth reassessments on the lost and damaged sections as well as those which were inadequately restored for maintaining 'integrity' as best as the budget allowed.

Building and managing the city wall trail and maintaining the landscape was another job for the Directorate for Hanyang City Walls. The UNESCO World Heritage inscription was necessary to promote the Seoul city walls as an international tourist attraction and elevate the city brand. However, it was equally, if not more important, to ensure that the walls won the interest and affection of Seoul citizens and create a commitment among citizens to preserving the walls. For this to happen, public access to the walls needed

to be improved by making the environment and infrastructure safe and pleasant. The Directorate stepped up to remove any overgrown bushes or plants that shielded the walls from sight or could potentially inflict structure damage, improved the trails along the walls, relocated facilities that prevent easy access and upgraded nighttime lighting. These actions were taken to help citizens relate more to the walls and to instill a sense of ownership in them.

Even so, the job of maintaining the landscape around the walls was not something that could be done solely by the Directorate. The responsibility required close collaboration with SMG departments (those in charge of urban planning, rehabilitation, construction, transportation, etc.) as well as with the concerned local governments. The Directorate worked closely with the Hanyang City Walls Advisory Committee to bring about a change in terms of cityscape management and relevant administrative affairs – to encourage the city and local governments and their offices to consider the city walls more as they conduct their business. In the meantime, the Directorate adopted diverse projects – holding a Seoul City Wall festival, collecting stories and content resources, publishing guidebooks on the city walls, and developing mobile applications – to promote the rich historical and cultural

background of the walls.

On July 18, 2012, soon after the Directorate was founded, the Hanyang City Walls Advisory Committee was launched. The Committee was comprised of some 20 experts, including cultural heritage experts from the Cultural Heritage Administration, ICOMOS Korea, and SMG as well as the head of the Seoul Museum of History, a historian, archaeologist, architect, urban planner, conservation scientist, and civic activist. The Committee proposed policies necessary for the preservation, maintenance, and use of the walls from the perspectives of experts and citizens and reviewed the policies brought forth by the Directorate for Hanyang City Walls. Another crucial role played by the Directorate was that it marked a turning point in the overriding philosophy with regard to the city wall preservation. Before the organization came along, the focus had been on the outward restoration. However, the Directorate brought positive changes, engaging in various research activities, studies, and deliberations and concentrating on the conservation of the original walls.

Since 2013, the Directorate held four international symposiums under the themes of ‘Heritage Cities and City Walls,’ ‘Components of Asian Cities and City Walls,’ ‘Sci-

entific Conservation of City Walls and Creative Intervention,’ and ‘Sustainable Maintenance of Heritage in Cities and Engaging Citizens’, so as to benefit from expert insights on the authenticity, integrity, and OUV of the walls and to check what was required for the UNESCO World Heritage inscription. Domestic conventions were also held –‘Significance and Authenticity of the Seoul City Wall as a World Heritage’ (December 9, 2013), ‘Academic Forum on the Villages around the Seoul City Wall’ (March 13, 2014), ‘Significance of the Seoul City Wall in the Hoehyeon Section on Namsan Mountain’ (September 12, 2014). In doing so, the Directorate offered an opportunity to rediscover the value of the city walls and share them with experts and citizens. Presentations made at these symposiums were discussed, revised, and published as the Seoul City Wall Academic Series.

Seoul City Wall Research Center and Seoul City Wall Museum

When the Directorate for Hanyang City Walls was founded, the Seoul City Wall Research Center was opened. A part of the Seoul Museum of History organization, the Research Center was established to collect and sort data on the city

walls, conduct multidisciplinary studies on the walls, and lay the academic foundation for the UNESCO World Heritage inscription. It had other responsibilities as well: to prepare the opening of Seoul City Wall Museum that provides an overview of the value of the walls as a historic icon and cultural heritage, to collect and manage relics, put on exhibitions, and secure content for educational purposes after the Museum opened. However, there were only a limited number of experts and researchers on the city walls. Temporarily, relevant researchers were added to the Dongdaemun Museum, newly founded in the process of building the Dongdaemun History & Culture Park. What this meant was that the Seoul City Wall Research Center handled matters related to the city walls as well as to the Dongdaemun Museum and the Dongdaemun Stadium Memorial.

Despite the shortage of human resources, the Seoul City Wall Research Center worked vigorously in collaboration with the Directorate for Hanyang City Walls and the Seoul Museum of History in conducting research and promotional activities for the city walls. The Research Center collected, studied, and organized records on the construction, renovation, and maintenance from the Joseon Dynasty documents such as the *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty* (*Joseon wangjo sillok*),

Daily Records of the Royal Court and Important Officials (Il-seongnok), *Diaries of the Royal Secretariat (Seungeongwon ilgi)*, and *Capital Garrison Records (Geumwiyeong deungnok)*. The Research Center also identified and organized data produced during the Japanese colonial rule, such as newspaper, magazines, documents, photographs, maps, and other such visual data. With official documents, photographs, and statements made with regard to city wall restoration works conducted after 1975, the Research Center established the Seoul City Wall Archive. The Archive will not only be the evidence required to prove the universal value of the Seoul city walls but also serve as a solid ground on which scholars could base their academic studies.

In addition to archiving, the Seoul City Wall Research Center also offered weekly classes and tour programs for the public. Its programs – ‘Seoul City Wall Tour,’ ‘History Tour into the City,’ ‘Seoul City Wall in Lego,’ and ‘On Patrol along the Old City Walls of Hanyang’ – played crucial roles in promoting the historical and cultural value of the walls among the public.

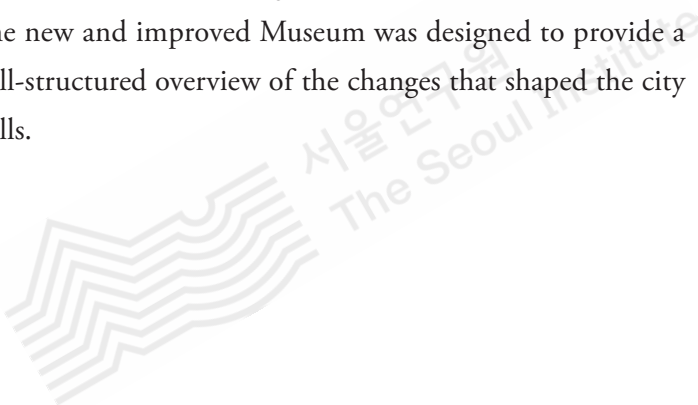
On July 31, 2014, the Seoul City Wall Museum was opened at the Seoul Design Support Center inside Dongdaemun City Wall Park. At this point, it had been less than two

years since the Seoul City Wall Research Center was opened. Because the city walls were structures physically fixed to the ground, it was not an easy matter to secure relevant relics and artifacts. There was no time to prepare for its opening as well. As a result, the Seoul City Wall Museum had to play multiple roles – exhibition, promotion, and information provider.

In addition to its permanent exhibits, the Seoul City Wall Museum conducted special exhibitions to assist citizens to recognize the value of the old walls surrounding their city. In 2014, the Museum organized a special exhibition named ‘City Walls and Villages’ to get a closer look at the history of villages and life of villagers around the city walls. The exhibition in early 2015 was titled ‘Changuimun and People,’ providing a peek into the history of life outside the gate of Changuimun. In the latter half of the year, the Museum presented ‘A Look at the City Walls,’ offering a wide variety of maps. In the first half of 2016, photographs were collected and organized for the exhibition of ‘City Walls in Modern Seoul,’ followed by ‘Seoul City Walls through Blue Eyes,’ an exhibition of the city walls based on the records made by Westerners.

As the Seoul City Wall Research Center continued to

produce more studies and relevant contents, the Seoul City Wall Museum, two years after its opening, faced a growing demand for bigger exhibition space and diversified content. The Museum began a project to meet the demand in early 2016. After completion, it reopened on September 6, 2016. Its permanent exhibitions doubled in space - Exhibition 1: 'Seoul and the City Walls of Hanyang'; Exhibition 2: 'Construction and Management of the City Walls of Hanyang'; and Exhibition 3: 'Damage and Rebirth of the City Walls.' The new and improved Museum was designed to provide a well-structured overview of the changes that shaped the city walls.



Recovering Its Original Self

Since the start of the restoration of the city walls in 1975 up to the start of the Won-Soon Park administration at the SMG, the administrative focus on the city wall maintenance was on the ‘restoration of the visible.’ The emergence of the Directorate for Hanyang City Walls, however, shifted the focus to preserving the original. If there were any remnants of the original, special care was taken so as not to inflict any damage. If there were no relics left, restoration was thoroughly investigated about in advance, to ensure authenticity. Any restoration plans developed in the past were revised altogether.

The mayoral office in Hyehwa-dong had long been an issue since the days of former Mayor Se-Hun Oh because

the office used the old city walls as its own. Mayor Oh had planned to build a new office in Hannam-dong and restore the old walls, but the plan never materialized. The office, built in Hannam-dong was switched to Seoul Partners House and was designed to boost global business for small to medium enterprises. On this tour of the city walls in the winter of 2011, Mayor Won-Soon Park said that the office in Hyehwa-dong would be relocated as soon as possible to facilitate the restoration of the walls. On its part, the Hanyang City Walls Advisory Committee discussed different propositions, such as marking the traces of the walls near Hyehwamun Gate, which had been severed by the road, or building a pedestrian path shaped like the city wall over the road. The conclusion was soon drawn: without authenticity, restoration was pointless.

Apart from the controversies surrounding the city wall restoration in Hyehwa-dong, Mayor Park vacated the Hyehwa-dong office in October 2013. The Cultural Heritage Administration requested a demolition, reasoning that the building had compromised the walls. An investigation that followed concluded that the building was not likely to inflict any further damage. The building was valuable in itself: the structure and style of houses built under the Japanese

colonial rule were well preserved and it had also served as the office for the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and for the Mayor of Seoul for decades. On May 9, 2014, the SMG opened the Hyehwa-dong office to the public until November 2016 when it was launched again as the Hyehwa-dong Exhibition and Information Center for the Seoul City Wall.

To the north of Heunginjimun Gate were constructions with stones from the city walls, engraved with writings. These, however, had been compromised partially during the restoration work in the Naksan Mountain area in 1975. Inside the walls, the topography had been considerably changed due to the construction of the Dongdaemun Church and the Dongdaemun Women's Hospital in the 1880s. The SMG examined the history and extent of change in the traditional house (formerly a pastor's residence) below the church and decided to demolish the structure, as it did not meet all the requirements of preservation. The SMG then studied the feasibility of authentic restoration of the 21-meter long city wall section that was connected to Dongdaemun Gate. An exhaustive review of photographs, records on past restorations, and other data revealed that the walls were worth the effort. The construction commenced in October 2015 and was completed that winter.

In the central plaza on the northern slope of Namsan Mountain, running down to Namdaemun Gate was a water fountain, built in the 1970s to serve as an attraction to visitors. This was where the city walls had been, damaged and destroyed during the Japanese colonial rule and during the rapid economic growth that succeeded it. The SMG therefore excavated the area in June 2013. The investigation indicated that the remains of the walls were relatively intact. At a three-meter mark from the ground were stone walls stacked in four to five or six to seven layers as well as a concrete layer on top to build the Korea Shrine. This precious data could shed light on how the city walls had been built and destroyed. The city walls that had once crossed the central plaza of Namsan Mountain were mended, first in 2009 and then again in 2012. The SMG decided to preserve and exhibit the original instead of building a new wall on top of the newly excavated site. In Joseon, no building was allowed to be constructed around the city walls higher than ground level. No structure was to overlook the king's residence. However, after the Japanese colonial government took over, the authority of royal palace was rejected and the city's population quickly grew, giving way to huts that the poor built around the city walls, above the ground level.

After Korea regained its independence, the speed at which these unauthorized houses were built increased even more. Through the 1950s and 1960s, the city walls on Naksan, Inwangsan, and Namsan Mountains teemed with villages. In 1975, some of these houses were removed for the city wall restoration, but many remained due to budgetary reasons. Over the years, these unauthorized houses became legal, and they were being continually renovated, forming low-rise residential areas along the walls. When the so-called New Town Program was carried out, most low-rise houses near the city walls were included in the target area. They were to be turned into high-rise apartments very soon. When the Program was first announced, it was fiercely criticized for obliterating the history that defined the place. Once in place, the Program would corrupt historical scenes and dissolve the innate, historical link between the city walls and villages. The housing market, however, soon grew sluggish, and associations set up for redevelopment ran into difficulties. Eventually, protests, demanding that their areas be pulled out of the redevelopment plan, erupted all over. It was the greatest issue that Mayor Won-Soon Park faced in his mayoralty. The mayor then decided to change the approach of reviving the city. Instead of the previous emphasis

on redevelopment, the new approach was going to focus on encouraging local residents to settle down and preserve the history of place. The preservation of these ‘wall communities,’ the low-rise residential areas on high ground near the city walls, was going to be a touchstone of this shift. It would shed light on the historical and dynamic relationship between the medieval city walls and settlements of modern citizens. With the ‘Comprehensive Plan on the Preservation, Maintenance, and Use of the Seoul City Wall’ (2012) and the ‘Master Plan on the Management of Historical and Cultural City within the Bounds of the Four City Gates’ (2012), the SMG set out to arrange dilapidated housing compounds near the walls into ‘walled communities’ since 2013. By this, the SMG aimed to create a model for urban regeneration unique to Seoul. The program targeted 22 wall communities in nine different regions – Seongbuk, Myeongnyun, Samseon, Changsin, Ihwa-Chungsin, Sindang, Gwanghui-Jangchung, Haengchon, and Buam. The program sought to improve the living environment, encourage locals to understand and share the value and potentials of wall communities, and examine the walls from a humanities perspective to discover stories and other such contents. Communities were assisted to grow and become more sustainable by adopt-

ing ‘special industry’. In July 2016, a project was started to transform the region of Haengchon into an ‘urban farming community’. To drive this project, other activities were carried out, such as ‘Haengchon Clearing,’ rooftop patch, and other such patches of farmland for local residents. Seedlings and bee farms were also included in the project to ensure that urban farming communities acquired the professional expertise they needed. The process and achievements of urban farming project are expected to be a crucial example in selecting other ‘special industries’ for other wall communities in the future. Wall communities are museums that show how Seoul’s modern urban communities are structured and reveal the identity of Seoul as a city of history and culture, when seen in conjunction with the old city walls. In this respect, preserving wall communities in their original structure and appearance and discovering the stories of local residents are crucial processes in upholding the historical value of the old city walls.

City Walls Built with Blocks of Memory

The Seoul City Wall is the quintessence of the Korean tradition of fortification, developed and refined over two thousand years. The city walls speak for Koreans who wished to build a city where nature and manmade constructions co-exist in perfect harmony by respecting the goodwill of the heavens and limiting human intervention to the minimum extent possible. The walls are the epitome of masonry and fortification techniques polished over five centuries. They were the fruit of hard work by all people of the Joseon Dynasty and are a critical infrastructure to be protected by all residents in the vicinity. Because the walls became part of nature, they escaped annihilation even as Seoul broke out of its medieval outlook to expand into a modern megalopolis.

Thus, the walls still stand as the world's largest and oldest capital fortification.

Today, Seoul is a global city that is host to ten million people. Its overall road system is still same as that of its old self, within the bounds of the walls. This is precisely why Seoul's old city walls are a one-of-a-kind heritage that demonstrates how historical cities of East Asia underwent modernization. The SMG deeply appreciates their value and thus aims to better preserve, maintain, and use its city walls.

On October 13, 2012, immediately after the Directorate for Hanyang City Walls was opened, the SMG hosted a day tour of the city walls and 600 years of Seoul. The event was designed to engage participants to walk the total length of the walls in ten hours. Participants included Mayor Won-Soon Park who joined the citizens to walk from Palgakjeong Pagoda on Namsan Mountain all the way to Sungnyemun Gate. In 2013, the last week of October was designated as 'The Seoul City Wall Week.' During the period, the SMG hosted a number of cultural activities while working with Jongno-gu, Seongbuk-gu, and other such local district governments as well as private-sector organizations (e.g., Korea Youth Corps, KYC) to hold culture and art events organized by wall communities such as Jangsu, Bukjeong, and Ihwa.

These events included: 'Jangsu-Bukjeong-Ihwa Community Festivity: Tunes of Hope for the Seoul City Wall', 'Baekbeom Plaza Community Festivity: Music in Art', 'The Seoul City Wall under the Moonlight' and 'The Seoul City Wall Tour and Citizen Festival.'

From 2014, Seoul City Wall & Culture, hosted by the Directorate for Hanyang City Walls, became an annual event. In its first year of 2014, the festival was held on September 26 for three days, offering diverse performances, opening ceremony, and a city wall tour with commentaries and celebrations for wall communities. In 2015, even more programs were held. The programs were 'The Seoul City Wall under the Moonlight for Foreign Tourists', 'Write a Song: Dream of the Seoul City Wall', 'The Seoul City Wall for the Young', 'Walking the 600 Years of History on the Seoul City Wall', 'The Seoul City Wall Concert,' 'Wall Communities Festivity', 'Making the New Seoul City Wall Map' and 'Donuimun in the Light.' The programs that followed in 2016 were 'The Seoul City Wall under the Moonlight for Foreign Tourists', 'The City Wall Stamp Rally', 'Guards of the Seoul City Wall Gates', 'The City Wall Writing Contest', 'The Seoul City Wall Circuit Bus', 'Dream of the Seoul City Wall' and 'Walking the 600 Years of History on the Seoul

City Wall.’

As such, the SMG is an active supporter of culture and art festivals that celebrate the old city walls because it wants its citizens to experience, enjoy, share, and remember the city walls as part of the city’s heritage. Cultural heritage encompasses much more than a physical structure; it reminds everyone of those people whose life is closely intertwined with the walls. Cultural heritage is, in essence, what is left from the bygone era. The legacy is reinterpreted from a modern perspective and thereby, gains a new cultural value. For such cultural heritage to be preserved, it needs to have a meaningful relationship with the people living in the modern era. One of the ways to achieve this is to generate a collective memory, which in fact, motivated the SMG to host various events for the Seoul City Wall.

Collective experience over a certain cultural heritage creates a shared understanding and common sentiment. Based on these shared feelings, the legacy becomes more not only a physical structure but transcends it to become a force that unites the minds of that particular community. Just as the people of Paris share similar perception and feelings about the Arc de Triomphe and the Eiffel Tower, just as citizens of Seoul were at an utter loss, as if they lost a beloved, when the

gate of Sungnyemun was burned, the unifying force gives form to the identity of community.

To preserve and pass down the tradition of the old city walls to the next generation, it is vital that the public sees the walls as an invaluable heritage that they need to protect. The walls need to become more than just a physical structure but a magnet that unites the minds in shared understanding. Only then, shall the Seoul City Wall truly become a cultural heritage that speaks for the life and identify of citizens.



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2. Lewis Mumford, Translated by Yeong-Gi Kim, 1990, *The City in History*, Myeongbo Publishing. p. 12–13.
3. Wu-Yong Jeon, 2008, *Into Seoul*, Dolbegae, p.15–16.
4. *History of the Three Kingdoms*, 'Annals of Silla.'
5. *Newly Enlarged Geographical Survey of Korea*, 'Gyeongju Historic Sites.'
6. *History of Goryeo*, 'Biography,' Biography of Wi-Je Kim.
7. *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*, Lunar September 13, the 4th year of King Taejo's reign.
8. *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*, September 24, the 5th year of King Taejo's reign.
9. *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*, December 10, the 3rd year of King Se-

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10. *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*, February 23, the 4th year of King Sejong's reign.
 11. *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*, March 25, the 30th year of King Sukjong's reign.
 12. *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty*, January 15, the 31st year of King Sukjong's reign.
 13. Jung-Hwan Lee, *Geographical Record of the Eight Provinces*, Summary on the Eight Provinces.
 14. *Annals of King Sejong*, Book 119, March 8, the 30th year of King Sejong's reign.
 15. *Annals of King Sejo* 37, November 8, the 11st year of King Sejo's reign.
 16. *Annals of King Yeongjo* 74, September 11, the 27th year of King Yeongjo's reign.
 17. *Annals of King Seongjong* Book 7, September 26, the 1st year of King Seongjong's reign.
 18. City History Compilation Committee of Seoul, 1978, *Seoul: Six Hundred Years in History* 2, p.288.
 19. *Daily Records of the Royal Court and Important Officials*, December 22, the 20th year of King Jeongjo's reign.
 20. *Annals of King Yeongjo* Book 95, February 23, the 36th year of King Yeongjo's reign.
 21. *Ibid*, April 1, the 36th year of King Yeongjo's reign.

22. Dong-Hwan Go, 1997, *Study on Commerce in Seoul in the Late Joseon Dynasty*, Jisik Sanup Publications, p.88.
23. *Annals of King Gojong* 48, March 30, the 44th year of King Gojong's reign.
24. *Annals of King Gojong* 48, June 22, the 44th year of King Gojong's reign.
25. *Official Gazette*, No. 3833, August 1, the 11st year of Gwangmu's reign.
26. Donga Ilbo, November 11, 1955.
27. Donga Ilbo, January 20, 1975.
28. Today, there are different approaches to maintaining cultural heritage, including preservation, conservation, restoration, recovery, renewal, and reform. Preservation is to preserve structures/cultural heritages as they are and; conservation is to preserve key selective components of a cultural heritage and relevant backgrounds where the surrounding circumstances are undergoing a change.; Restoration is to restore and recreate the heritage as it would have been at a certain point time and recovery is to focus on recovering function rather than appearance. Renewal is to make full repairs, both internal and external, to reinforce a cultural heritage; and reform is to abandon the previous status to completely make a new one. UNESCO strictly requires that 'restoration' involves using the same materials and techniques that had previously been used. If this is not feasible, different materials may be used but should be marked as recreation. By these standards,

the old city walls of Seoul restored in 1974–1975 are closer to reform or renewal than they are to restoration. In the Joseon Dynasty, removing the old structures and building a new one was referred to as *dungeon*, which can be translated as ‘rebuild.’

29. Donga Ilbo, August 17, 1994.
30. Hankyoreh, June 30, 1994.
31. Hankook Ilbo, December 16, 2002.
32. Munhwa Ilbo, June 13, 2003.
33. Kyunghyang Shinmun, December 19, 2005.
34. Yonhap News, January 24, 2006.
35. Yonhap News, January 24, 2006.
36. Money Today, January 31, 2012.
37. SMG Culture, Tourism, and Design Headquarters, “Comprehensive Plan on the Preservation, Maintenance, and Use of the Seoul City Wall,” May 2012.