
樊巖蔡相國七十歲真

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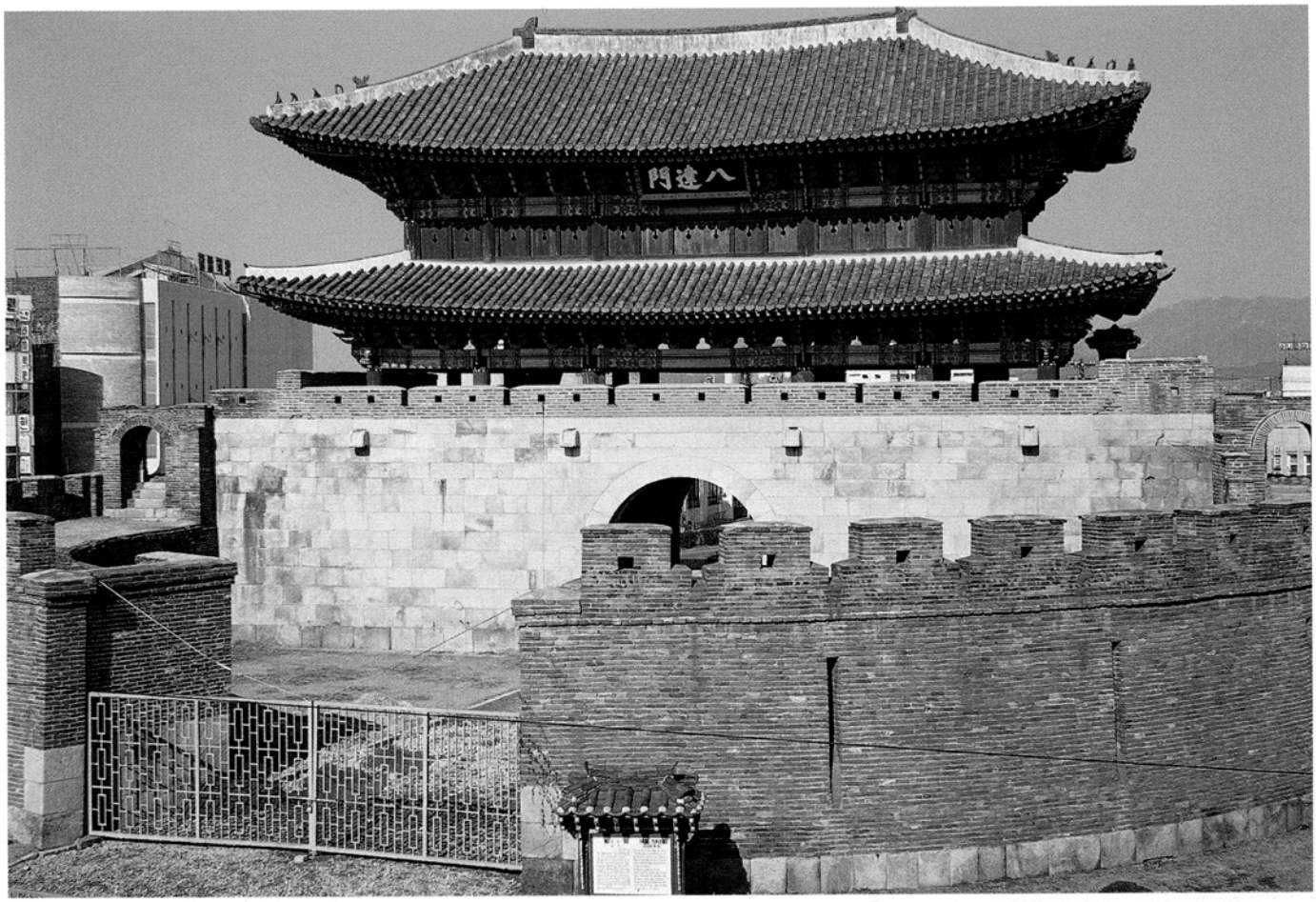


61. Above: Paldal gate in the city wall of Suwon, built in the late 18th century under the direction of Prime Minister Chae Che-gong and the Sirhak scholar Chong Yag-yong, using Western-style castle-building techniques.

which it represents can be compared with the later Choson city wall at Suwon. This was built in the eighteenth century under King Chongjo, when he wanted to build a new royal city adjacent to his father's tomb, as a way of atoning for his father's murder by his grandfather King Yongjo. The south gate at Suwon, called Paldal gate, is a double-roofed structure with baffled walls (that is, protective side walls) (fig. 61). At Suwon, Western-inspired castle-building techniques and labour-saving devices such as cranes were employed by the Sirhak scholar-official Chong Yag-yong, and the whole project came under the supervision of Prime Minister Chae Che-gong (1720–99) (fig. 62).[29]

Painting

Religious painting

62. Left: Portrait of Chae Che-gong (1720–99), prime minister under King Chongjo in the late 18th century, painted by Yi Myong-ki (1760–1820). Ink and colours on silk, dated 1789. Ht: 69 cm.

Buddhist paintings of the Choson dynasty largely took the form of banners or *taenghwa*. Some extremely large taenghwa were used in outdoor ceremonies, in Tibetan fashion. They often measured as much as 14 m by 8 m (46 ft by 26 ft) and were only brought out for special occasions, such as the Buddha's Birthday, when the temple had to accommodate large numbers of people. These banners, painted on cotton or hemp, were suspended from a set of twin poles, often in front of the main hall of the temple. Their Korean name is *kwaebul taenghwa* and they usually depicted one large Buddha or Bodhisattva. Only late Choson kwaebul taenghwa remain, the earliest dating from 1622. Indoor banner paintings

were smaller, ranging in height from 60 cm (23 in) to several metres. They were also painted on cotton or hemp, sometimes on paper. Although banner paintings were produced in the Koryo period, these were usually fairly small, personal paintings for private use. Wall-paintings were more common for temples. It is clear that in Korea, banner paintings increased in popularity from the sixteenth century onwards, much later than in China or Japan. At Dunhuang, for instance, large numbers of banner paintings are evidence of their popularity in China in the Tang period. Banner paintings were also used in Japan from the Heian period onwards. However, the era of popularity of colourful banner paintings in Korea ran parallel with the years when Chinese and Japanese artists were changing to Zen-style ink paintings. It is possible that contact with the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, which was popular in Korea during the Koryo dynasty, led to the development of the taenghwa in Korea in the Choson. The Korean name taenghwa is very similar to the Tibetan word *thangka* and the period of popularity of banner paintings in both countries coincided.[30]

63. Guardian king, one of four Heavenly Kings of the four directions (*Sa chonwang*) who guard the entrance to Korean Buddhist temples, either in painted or sculpted form. Ink and mineral colours on hemp. Choson period, dated 1796–1820. 3 m × 2 m.

Indoor taenghwa depicting the Buddhas Sakyamuni or Amitabha or illustrations of sutras were regarded as the most sacred and would have been placed in the most important halls of a temple. Taenghwa were closely related to the layout of the monastery for which they were painted and each taenghwa was originally intended for the adornment of a particular hall. In the various invasions of Korea in the first half of the Choson period, temples were destroyed and only late Choson taenghwa remain. It is therefore not always possible to match taenghwa with the temple for which they were originally intended. In general taenghwa depicting Buddhas would have been placed behind the altar in a main hall, while paintings of bodhisattvas and arhats, portraits of eminent monks and the ten kings of hell would have been displayed in subsidiary halls appropriate to them, such as the Hall of Patriarchs, the Hall of Ksitigarbha or the Hall of the Underworld Courts. Less sacred were the paintings of the large numbers of tutelary deities or *sinjung*, Indian, Chinese and Korean, such as devas, lokapalas (or the four Heavenly Kings) (fig. 63), the Mountain Spirit and Seven Star Buddhas. Particularly popular in Korea were the banner paintings depicting the Kamro-wang or King of the Immortal Nectar, an incarnation of Amitabha, who delivered souls suffering in hell to the Western Paradise of Amitabha. These paintings depict detailed scenes of hell, a ritual altar in the middle ground and Buddhas and bodhisattvas in the top part.[31]

Although few examples of early Choson Buddhist painting remain, the British Museum has a white-robed Avalokitesvara which can be attributed to the fifteenth to sixteenth century on stylistic grounds. The wall-paintings at Muwi temple are examples of early Choson mural painting and are characterized by new ways of portraying clothes and faces and by the use of ink outlines.[32] There was also a growing use of landscape painting in combination with Son or Zen subjects. This popularity of Son-style painting in the early Choson has been linked to the development of Zen ink landscape in Muromachi Japan.[33]

Representative of the sixteenth century or mid-Choson period is a group of triad paintings from a set of four hundred produced in 1565 under the regency of the Dowager Queen Munjong, who was a fervent Buddhist and patron of Buddhist art.[34] Koryo features still remain, such as the use of gold and deep mineral colours and fine lines. However, the Koryo fine translucent gauze clothes are now replaced by solid colours and ornamentation is more sparse. Medallion patterns become simpler and brushwork is less delicate. There is

therefore a certain flatness and lack of mystery to Choson Buddhist paintings, when compared to Koryo ones.[35]

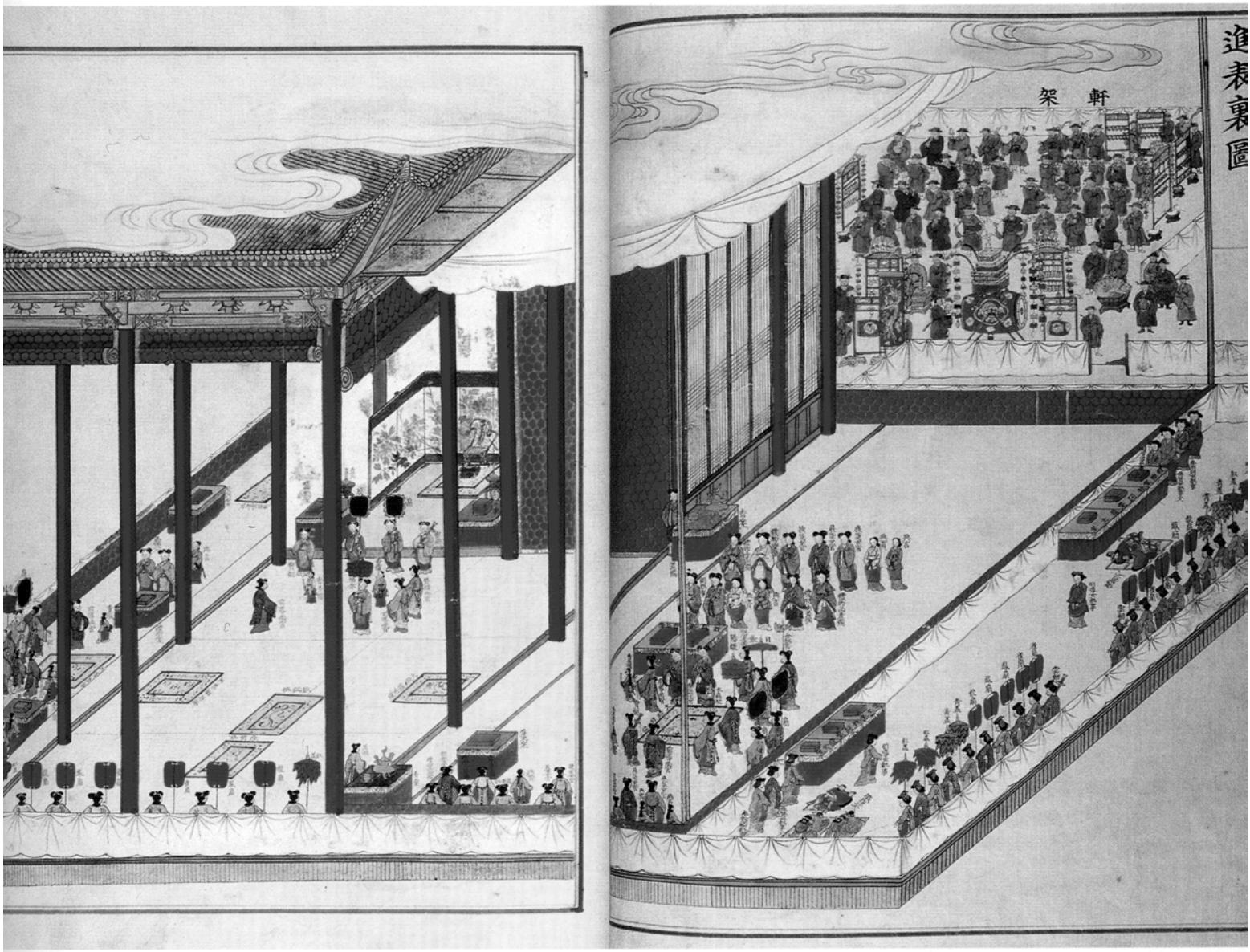
In the eighteenth century kings Yongjo and Chongjo relaxed the anti-Buddhist policies of their predecessors and a large number of monasteries were rebuilt. The two kings nevertheless had a somewhat ambivalent attitude to Buddhism. Yongjo, for instance, ordered the closing of prayer temples and forbade the entry of monks into the city, while at the same time renovating Chingwan-sa to ensure his mother's well-being. In general Buddhism was the faith of the masses. On the one hand the males of the court and the literati practised Neo-Confucianist ethics, while on the other hand, women and commoners believed in Buddhism. Buddhist art of the period accordingly incorporated many folk and shamanistic elements. Korean costumes appeared instead of Chinese ones, reflecting the influence of the prevailing genre painting movement in the eighteenth century. The secular world, moreover, became more important. It was in the Nectar Ritual paintings of the eighteenth century that this world first appeared, and the depiction of ordinary people in the background of Buddhist paintings was a major innovation of these years, showing that Buddhism had become the religion of the common people. It had also become reconciled with Korean Confucianism, with the introduction of Buddhist ancestral festivals and the assimilation in Korea of the Sutra of Filial Piety.[36] Late Choson Buddhist paintings are characterized by bright colours, predominantly red, green and blue. Groups of many figures became dominant, some outdoor taenghwa containing as many as two hundred figures. Faces, shoulders and arms were exaggerated and mouths became smaller with stylized spiral twirls to moustaches and beards. The nineteenth century saw a decline and simplification in Buddhist painting, reflecting the financial weakness of temples. Thick pigments, predominantly bright blue, were applied without discrimination and the compositions became stereotyped. Buddhist paintings became closer to folk paintings (see fig. 77).[37]

Paintings of Daoist immortals by artists such as Kim Myong-guk (1600–after 1662) and Kim Hong-do (1745–?1818) are evidence of the assimilation by Koreans of the Daoist painting tradition from China which was associated there with the Zhe school.[38]

64. Illustrated manuscript of the royal ritual record of the sixtieth anniversary of the consummation in 1749 of the marriage of Lady Hyegyong, wife of the murdered Crown Prince Sado and mother of King Chongjo, showing the polychrome court painting style. Ink and colours on Korean paper, dated 1809. Page ht: 47.5 cm; double page width: 57.5 cm.

Court painting

Although early Choson court painting is known to have existed, little is known of such painting up to the late Choson period, due to the lack of extant works. However, court painting in the eighteenth century reflected the confidence of the period, under kings Yongjo and Chongjo, in contrast to the insecurity of the two previous centuries. The distinction made in China between professional court artists and amateur painters was not as important in Korea. Korea had very few exceptional literati artists and they were not as influential as they were in China. Choson court paintings were usually composed collectively and were unsigned, although many of the artists involved were the best painters in the country, recruited through government examinations to the Bureau of Painting (Tohwawon), which had been established by the beginning of the dynasty. The Bureau was attached to the Ministry of Rites, reflecting its central role in producing works of art to portray and record important royal and state rituals. Unlike the central examination system, the talent-recruitment examination for the Bureau of Painting was not confined to the hereditary yangban aristocrats. Promotion tests consisted of copying old masters



from the palace collection, although sometimes Bureau painters were honoured with a ranked position outside the Bureau. This was so with Kim Hong-do. Scholar-official painters, who were not Bureau members, sometimes also participated in group painting projects for the court or state. Their names were usually recorded separately in recognition of their different status. Bureau painters belonged to the social group called chung'in or 'middle people'. Since their pay was rather low, Bureau painters often also undertook private commissions.

Korean court art was archaic in style, conventional and fairly repetitive, with a limited palette. Its function was to show the king's virtuous rule, through the depiction of rituals and ceremonies. During the Choson there was a proliferation of *uigwe* (records of rituals) and *uigwe-do* (illustrations of the records of rituals). These were stored in the Royal Library (Kyujanggak) and other branches of the Royal Archives established by King Chongjo. A fine example of such a painting can be seen in the British Library (fig. 64). Painted records of King Chongjo's visits to his father's relocated tomb and the newly

constructed city of Hwasong (present-day Suwon) are also good examples of this type of work.[39] The five colours used in court painting (red, yellow, blue-green, black and white) are in contrast to the monochrome ink literati style and probably derive ultimately from the archaic Chinese theory of the five elements. Longevity motifs, deriving from Chinese Daoism, abound in Choson court paintings, such as the ten longevity symbols, or the sun, moon and five peaks theme. The latter were often portrayed in screen format, to be placed behind the throne (see fig. 80). The screen depicting the sun, moon and five peaks, when placed behind the throne, showed the king's intermediary position between heaven and earth.[40] Heavily influenced by ancient China, these paintings were intended to portray an ideal Confucian state as, by the eighteenth century, Korea regarded itself as the last bastion of true Confucian civilization. The archaic Chinese style led to the development of a Korean version of the painting of scholars' items, as seen in seventeenth-century Chinese paintings and prints. In late Choson Korea, screens painted in a dramatically simplified and schematic way with shelves full of books and writing equipment (*chaekkori* or 'books and things') provided symbols of Confucian culture (see fig. 81).

The use of the screen format for court painting derived from ancient China but its general use developed in Korea far beyond that of China. Although screen paintings are perhaps usually associated with Japan, in fact paintings of all subjects were produced in screen format in Choson Korea. The screen was ideally suited for use in Korean houses and served as a wind break as well as for decoration (see section on folk painting in chapter 5, pp. 149–55).[41]

Portrait painting

Most of the extant Choson period portraits date to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and are of scholar-officials, many of the portraits having been preserved carefully by their descendants (see fig. 62). Portrait painting was closely connected with the Confucian importance of family lineage and can be divided into six categories that depended on the social status of the subject: portraits of kings; meritorious subjects; elderly officials; literati; women; and portraits of Buddhist monks (see fig. 6), generally displayed in temples.[42] A large number of portraits were produced for the twenty-seven Choson kings. Taejo, the first king, had twenty-six portraits painted of himself, while Yongjo had a new portrait every ten years. The painter Kim Hong-do painted King Chongjo as crown prince and again in 1781 as king. He was therefore honoured with the title *oyong hwasa* or 'painter of the august countenance'.[43] Unfortunately many royal Choson portraits were destroyed during the Japanese invasions and more recently, during the 1950–53 Korean War. The Sungjongwon ilgi or Diary of the Royal Secretariat describes the complicated procedures followed when producing royal portraits. Divination was sometimes practised in order to find auspicious days for the work, which was often examined in progress by the king. Rough sketches were made before the portrait was painted in ink on silk. Then it was coloured, mounted and a title inscribed. This was followed by an enshrinement and citation of all the artists and supervising ministers. The painting of a royal portrait thus constituted a major state event, displaying the authority of the king.

There was a great increase in portrait painting of meritorious subjects or *kongsin* during the Choson. Sometimes as many as a hundred people were given this title at one

time, as a result of distinguished service. It was a great honour for the whole family and succeeding generations. The portrait which inevitably accompanied the award of this title was usually carried out to a formula, with the subject dressed in his official robes, his rank badge on his chest and black silk hat on his head, seated with his hands folded. In the late Choson, this pose also became popular for portraits amongst aristocrats who had not received the meritorious subject status.

Many of the portraits of elderly officials which exist today are in the form of album leaves, although there are some hanging scrolls and even folding screens. These portraits are called *kiro-do* and were painted as a way of commemorating the subject, who would have been a virtuous character holding a respectable position, who had reached the age of sixty or seventy (see fig. 62).

The most common portraits were of the literati or sadaebu, usually executed as large paintings for ceremonial use. They are nonetheless generally more relaxed and individual in style. The subject sat cross-legged, wearing scholar's robes called *simui* or *hakchangui*, or on a chair wearing his official uniform. Self-portraits were also sometimes painted in the Choson: the literati painters Kim Si-sup (1435–93), Yun Tu-so (1668–1715) and Kang Se-hwang (1713–91) all painted self-portraits.

Paintings of queens were produced in the early Choson and enshrined together with those of kings in a hall for royal ancestral portraits. Confucian morals dictated that men and women should not meet, so it was impossible for a queen to sit for a male painter. The early Choson trend for having portraits of husbands and wives painted together seems to have died out after the mid-Choson.

In portrait painting it was considered very important not only to make the details accurate but also to capture the person's soul. It was commonly believed that the soul rested in the eyes and so, when a king's portrait was being executed, great care was taken to select an auspicious day for the painting of the eyes. In a well-known episode, Kang Se-hwang painted his self-portrait but was dissatisfied with it. Only when his friend Im Hui-su added a few brushstrokes along the lower edge of the cheekbones did Kang feel that his soul had been captured. However, although portraits aimed to show the physical characteristics and personality of the subject, they were also, to a great extent, idealized portrayals, designed to evoke reverence and respect. This reverence for portraits of their ancestors led Koreans either to bury them in a safe place or to carry them away when they fled from crises. Over one thousand Korean portrait paintings have survived.[44]

Plant and flower painting

The choice of bamboo painting as the first and most important subject for court painters reflected the taste of the scholar-officials in the Choson. Bamboo painting is usually divided into two styles: a conservative one, using outlines and wash; and a calligraphic one depending on individual brushstrokes. Although the earliest bamboo paintings in the conservative style date to the late sixteenth century, porcelain wares decorated with this style of painting dating to the second half of the fifteenth century suggest that bamboo painting was already popular then. In fact it probably flourished as early as the Koryo dynasty, as is evidenced by decoration on inlaid celadons and Buddhist paintings. Famous Choson dynasty bamboo painters in the calligraphic style are Yi Su-mun, active in the fifteenth century, and Yi Chong (1541–1624) (fig. 65), Yu Tok-chang (1694–1774) and Sin Wi