

Social Customs of the People of the 19th Century

—focusing on Costumes and Lifestyles portrayed in Hae Won's *Pungsokhwachop*—

Yang, Suk-Hyang* · Lee, Tae-Ho**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Clothing & Textiles, Suncheon University

**Professor, Department of Art Education, Chonnam University

Costumes are an important symbol of many facets of culture. Clothing is specific to lifestyle, time period, and environment. Traditional Korean clothing symbolizes the Korean people and their unique lifestyle. The purpose of this study is to use the detailed, realistic paintings in the Hae Won's *Pungsokhwachop* to study the daily life and social customs of the early 19th century. This book of paintings is national treasure number 135 and is displayed in the Gan Song Gallery. Hae Won's paintings do an exemplary job of describing the daily life of this period and his characters portray many thoughts, concerns, and emotions.

In addition, Hae Won shows the changes in lifestyle taking place at this time through tasteful and artistic scenes in which men and women interact and show physical affection in situations such as a picnic. These scenes were meant to challenge the social customs of the period and the hypocritical morality of the Yangban, or upper classes. The paintings are rendered with calligraphy ink and some color and are 28.2 cm x 35.2 cm. There are thirty paintings and these paintings can be separated into five classifications.

Firstly, some scenes portray the manners and customs of tavern life and specific types of costumes, through which we can see the changing culture around Seoul during this time. Secondly, many of Hae-Won's paintings show scenes in which men and women find pleasure in each other and are set within a Kisaeng's house, or a pleasure resort. Within

these scenes we can see the costumes of the Yangban, the highest class, who do not work, but are concerned with playing and enjoying life and the costumes of the lower classes and their lifestyle as well. The scenes in which Hae-Won shows men and women finding pleasure in each other's company can be classified into three categories: indoors, outdoors, and the third classification, erotic scenes that express a human being's sexual instincts with reality. These paintings display many kinds of underwear and show the ways that this clothing was worn. Fourthly, related to women's lifestyle, these paintings show women in prostitution, buddism, and shamanism.

Imjinwaeran, an invasion by Japan in 1592, and Byungjahoran, an invasion by China, resulted in many social changes. Traditional society was then demolished and new movements for change arose. Women's desire for change and protests against the old system were portrayed as well. The painter might have wanted to show the hypocrisy of the old system with satire.

Lastly, the lifestyle of Ginyu, a kind of prostitute, was shown in these paintings. These women were good at singing, dancing, writing poetry, and playing musical instruments. The paintings expressed their personalities and showed that, in those days, women were not free to express themselves. The lifestyle of these women contributed to social change.