

Article

# Landscape-Enjoying through the Pavilions of Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong as Reflected in the Literature of the Joseon Dynasty

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*The Review of Korean Studies* Volume 26 Number 1 (June 2023): 139–171

doi: 10.25024/review.2023.26.1.139

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## Introduction

When it came to admiring the view around the walled city of Pyeongyang and the Daedonggang River in pre-modern Korea, Bubyongnu Pavilion 浮碧樓 and the Yeongwangjeong Pavilion 練光亭 constituted the first famous scenic sight that was mentioned. Pyeongyang's Bubyongnu Pavilion, which North Korea has reportedly designated as its national treasure no. 17, established its name as one of the top three pavilions of the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910) along with Yeongnamnu Pavilion 嶺南樓 in Miryang and Chokseongnu Pavilion 矗石樓 in Jinju. Bubyongnu Pavilion is said to have been built as part of the annex building to Yeongmyeongsa Temple in the times of the Goguryeo Kingdom (B.C. 37–A.D. 668). The history of Yeongwangjeong, also a well-known attraction and national treasure no. 16 of North Korea, can be traced back to Goguryeo, when the walled city of Pyeongyang was first being built. During the Joseon era, aristocrats readily used the two pavilions to hold literary or artistic gatherings to enjoy music or art. This tradition was discontinued for over 70 years due to the division of the Korean Peninsula.

The kings of the Goryeo Dynasty (918–1392) would occasionally go sightseeing and tour Pyeongyang with their subjects. They especially enjoyed watching the outdoor performances and boating at Bubyongnu and its vicinity. Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong were one of the best-known places to be frequented by the kings.<sup>1</sup> During the Joseon Dynasty, literati groups would visit Pyeongyang to meet government officials they were acquainted with or drop by on their diplomatic missions to China. They would enjoy the area's historical relics and scenic sites. The pavilions of Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong were the first places to view when visiting Pyeongyang. Those who reached the two pavilions took time to enjoy viewing the landscape. This enjoyment was linked to literary and artistic pleasure, which let the place become inspiration to write

poetry and prose.

In terms of pavilion architecture, Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong both feature unique structures. Hong Gyeongmo (1774–1851) said that “Yeongwangjeong is like a beautiful woman in light makeup, seated behind a beaded curtain, while Bubyongnu is like an ascetic in rough hemp clothes but with a remarkable presence.” Hong summed up Yeongwangjeong and Bubyongnu as “beauty and splendor” 佳麗 and “absolute pureness” 清絕, respectively.<sup>2</sup> Bak Saho (1784–1854), who passed through Pyeongyang on his way to China on a diplomatic mission during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, placed Bubyongnu first. According to Bak, “Bubyongnu is situated inside Janggyeongmun Gate 長慶門. It rises quite high but gives off a comfortable feeling that is on par with Yeongwangjeong. However, Bubyongnu, with Moranbong Peak 牧丹峯 next to it, Neungrado Island 綾羅島 in front, and situated slightly away from the city, has a cooler and fresher atmosphere than Yeongwangjeong.”<sup>3</sup> Although Bubyongnu was sometimes preferred in this way due to its remote location and richer views, Yeongwangjeong nevertheless received much attention from sightseers in Pyeongyang given how wonderful views could be enjoyed close by the city.

Among previous studies looking at historically significant sites of beauty in the Pyeongyang region, one research focused on the exchanges that took place at Bubyongnu between central and local literati (Jang 2014). The study diachronically analyzed poetic exchanges to show how central and local intellectuals communicated at Bubyongnu from early to late Joseon Dynasty. Participants included high-profile figures such as King Sejo 世祖 (r. 1455–1468), Yim Je 林悌 (1549–1587), Yi Sihang 李時恒 (1672–1736), and Yi Mansu 李晩秀 (1752–1820).

The present article seeks to identify precisely how literary figures of the Joseon Dynasty shared and enjoyed the cultural landscapes of Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong. Whenever literati groups such as envoys came to Pyeongyang to stay for a while, local officials of Pyeongyang including the provincial governor would guide them to scenic spots and hold banquets

\* The work was supported by the Academy of Korean Studies Overseas Dispatch Program in 2017.

1 Records show that King Eui-jong visited Yeongmyeongsa Temple and Bubyongnu Pavilion in 1168 to hold a banquet. He enjoyed boating and watched performances of circus horses. In 1333, King Chungshuk visited the Daedonggang River, held performances on the boat to comfort the King of Shenyang 瀋陽 and sailed on a double-deck ship at Bubyongnu Pavilion. In 1388, King Wu had the music of Mongol performed and played the Mongol oboe himself (*Goryeosa jeolyo*, vol. 11; vol. 25; vol. 33). Yeongwangjeong Pavilion seems to have been frequented by many people when a new pavilion was being established while the city walls of Pyeongyang were being repaired in 1111, during the 6<sup>th</sup> year under King Yejong (*Joseon hyangto daebaekgw*).

2 Hong Gyeongmo, *Gwanam jeonso*, vol. 16: “練光如冶女輕粧，掩映簾箔，浮碧如披褐道士，丰神特秀，練光以佳麗，浮碧以清絕，相與之伯仲焉。”

3 Bak Saho, *Simjeongo*, vol. 1, fifth day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1828: “浮碧樓在長慶門內，縹緲窈窕，與練光相伯仲，而傍有牧丹峯，前對綾羅島，城市稍遠，故清爽過之。”

for artistic enjoyment and pleasure. During these times, Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong were the locations of choice. Those who frequently traveled between Joseon and China wrote detailed descriptions of how they enjoyed the beautiful sights of Pyeongyang, especially the architecture such as Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong. Other literary figures who visited Pyeongyang for various reasons, such as visiting their acquaintances, also wrote appealing poems about their trips to the two pavilions. This article will thus analyze travel records and well-known poetry during then to understand how Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong captured the interest of the literati class. The findings of this article will lay the groundwork necessary to systematize how Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong were materialized into literary space in the time-honored tradition of writing poetry and prose in the presence of these two pavilions. This research will also contribute to vibrant discourse in the area of literary geography, which studies geographical names and space in the literary context.

## Central Landscape of Route Entering the Walled City of Pyeongyang

Envoys heading to China reached Pyeongyang after leaving the capital city of Hanyang and passing regions including Pyeongsan, Seoheung, Bongsan, and Hwangju. The travel records by Joseon envoys to China contain descriptions of the first things they observed upon entering Pyeongyang. Their first impressions of Pyeongyang tended to be the moment they stepped into the walled city, after which they would get a full view of all the picturesque scenery around the city, including Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong, as if seeing it on one big screen.

Travelers usually entered through the Pyeongyang City Administration, past the borders between Pyeongyang and Junghwa. Envoys would start writing about their experiences of Pyeongyang beginning from this point in great detail. Among others, the first things they usually started with were the Jaesongjeong Pavilion 栽松亭, otherwise known as Jaesongwon 栽松院, and the majestic sight of Simnijangnim 十里長林, which was a long forest stretching about 10-*ri* (approximately 5.4 km). They would then describe the boats they used to cross the Daedonggang River to reach the walled city of Pyeongyang. This was where they focused on Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong, the two pavilions representing the city.

*Simjeongo*, written by Bak Saho after he traveled to China in 1828, well summarizes his first impression of Pyeongyang upon entering the district:

The weather is clear. I traveled 50-*ri* to Pyeongyang and slept at Daedonggwang Guesthouse....Pyeongyang has the best of all rivers and mountains (*je-il gangsan* 第一江山). This area continued to prosper for 5,000 years since the times of Dangun 檀君 and Gija (Ch. Jizi 箕子). No place can compete with Pyeongyang when it comes to the scenic site in this country. As I moved from Yeongjegyo Bridge 永濟橋 toward Daedonggang River, I saw a road along the Simnijangnim Forest on the south side of the river. The boat sailed with the wind. Flocks of waterfowl kept appearing and disappearing within the forest. *At the end of the forest, a multi-colored pavilion and city walls cemented with lime towered over me, and its dimly lit features looked as if an actual painting had come alive, leaving me feeling quite refreshed in mind and heart.* While looking around the place, my fingers pointing at the scene, I finally got onto the boat. The boat had a red rail and colored eaves with plaques hanging above. The left side read “Neungna beomga” (a boat floating in Neungnado Island 綾羅泛舸), and the right side read “Byeokan busa” (a raft floating to the Milky Way 碧漢浮槎). Then, I got off the boat, went past Daedongmun Gate 大同門, entered Yeongwangjeong 練光亭, and rested there.<sup>4</sup> (emphasis mine)

Simnijangnim Forest came into view once one crossed Yeongjegyo Bridge past the border dividing the districts of Junghwa and Pyeongyang. A road was set between the long trails of Simnijangnim Forest and guided the envoys to the crossing point of Daedonggang River. To the delight of the travelers, one would occasionally catch a glimpse of birds flying through the trees of Simnijangnim Forest or boats riding the waves of the river. The Simnijangnim Forest ended at this point by the river, where travelers were granted a full view of the most famous landscape of Pyeongyang. The image of the high-rising city walls, the lime-cemented battlement, and the fashionably multi-colored pavilion sitting

4 Bak Saho, *Simjeongo* vol. 1, fourth day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1828: “晴, 平壤五十里大同館宿....平壤, 第一江山也, 檀箕以來, 至今五千年繁華之場, 國內名勝, 無與相埒, 自永濟橋, 向大同江, 江之南十里長林沿江夾路, 風帆沙鳥, 隱映於其中. 林盡而彩閣粉堞, 臨江突起, 映帶縹緲, 宛開一幅活畫, 令人已覺神氣爽然. 指顧之頃, 遽爾登船, 船之制, 朱欄彩檐有扁楹, 左曰綾羅泛舸, 右曰碧漢浮槎. 下船由大同門, 入住練光亭.”

on top of it would have seemed like something out of a vivid painting. Heo Bong (1551–1588) mentioned the lime-cemented castle wall and pavilion building atop in his book *Jocheongi*, which was written in 1574. Recalling the compliments from Chinese visitors about how Pyeongyang's scenery was on par with that of Suzhou and Hangzhou in China, Heo Bong commented in his book that the place looked as wonderful as the heavens of Taoist immortals.<sup>5</sup>

While many colorfully painted architecture such as the gate tower boasted their splendor, Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong were unrivalled in the attention they drew from people traveling the region. Below is a recreation using an old map of the route that officials such as Bak Saho and Heo Bong would have taken upon entering the walled city of Pyeongyang back then.<sup>6</sup>



Marked on the map are points on the route traveling from Junghwa to the walled city of Pyeongyang. From south to north, the points marked are Junghwa border 中和界 - Jaesongwon 栽松院 - Simnijangnim 十里長林 - Daedonggang River 大同江 - Daedongmun Gate 大同門. At the end of Simnijangnim Forest, the view opens up to the scenery stretching from Yeongwangjeong to Bubyongnu. The pavilions would have been the most eye-catching feature.

\*Entry route to the walled city of Pyeongyang (—>)

\*Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong viewed from crossing point of Daedonggang River (- ->)

**Figure 1.** Hypothesized Travel Route to the Walled City of Pyeongyang and View from Crossing Point of Daedonggang River

5 Heo Bong, *Jocheongi*, second day of the fifth lunar month in the year of 1547: “望見大江自東而來，奔流觸城下。折而西去，粉堞逶迤，樓臺錯落，宛若仙居，華人擬平壤於蘇杭者，其殆庶乎。”

6 The map used for this article is known as the *Haedong jido* (*Atlas of Korea* 海東地圖), which was made around the 1750s. It is currently in the possession of Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies of Seoul National University.

The literary work left by travelers show that the boat, which took people to the walled city of Pyeongyang from the river point where the view of Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong opened up, also left a lasting impression. High-ranking officials including envoys to China found the boats used for crossing the river just as attractive as the painted pavilions. According to officials like Heo Bong and Yi Haeung (1775–1825), the boat was a “jeongjaseon” (a boat with a pavilion-like structure erected within 亭子船) with a rooftop decorated with grass. Carrying a plaque of its name, “Seungbyeokjeong” 乘碧亭, the boat could accommodate over 100 passengers and over a dozen strong workers in addition to maneuver the ropes.<sup>7</sup> The pavilion-boat also had two more old plaques reading “Neungna beomga” (a boat floating in Neungnado Island 綾羅泛舸) and “Byeokan busa” (a boat floating to the Milky Way 碧漢浮槎). Those who rode the boat would have savored the meanings of the names and felt as if they were being specially guided into the grand beauty of the place. As the records of Heo Bong, Kim Changeop (1658–1721), and Yi Euibong (1733–1801) suggest, the government office of Pyeongyang went all out in receiving their guests, including refreshments and musical performances by female entertainers. The travelers who embarked on the pavilion-boat could admire the two pavilions—Yeongwangjeong in front and Bubyongnu about 5-ri (approximately 2.7 km) to the northeast—as they approached them.

Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong, standing high above the castle walls, would have provided a splendid and wonderful view to the travelers as they gazed at the walled city. This first impression of Pyeongyang likely aroused interest in the tour even further. Travelers would eventually decide that their first destinations be Yeongwangjeong and Bubyongnu as soon as they entered the city and settled at their lodgings.

7 Refer to the travel journals written by Heo Bong (*Jocheongi*, twenty-second day of the fifth lunar month in the year of 1547) and Yi Hae-eung (*Gyesan gijeong*, thirtieth day of the tenth lunar month in the year of 1803). “Seungbyeokjeong” 乘碧亭 was written by Oh Himaeng 吳希孟 in 1537 and “Byeokan busa” 碧漢浮槎 by Heo Guk 許國, the royal envoy to China in 1567 (refer to *Bugwollok*, first day of the fourth lunar month in the year of 1761). As the travel records of Heo Bong, Kim Changeop, and Yi Euibong show, the two plaques “Seungbyeokjeong” and “Byeokan busa” seemed to have adorned the boat mentioned above since early Joseon. “Seungbyeokjeong” was also referred to as “Beombyeokga” 泛碧家 or “Beombyeognu” 泛碧樓 (Kim 2016, 101). Other comments about the “Neungna beomga” plaque can be found only in the travel records to China written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, such as Yi Hae-ung’s *Gyesan gijeong* (1803), Kim Seonmin’s *Gwanyollok* (1804), and Bak Saho’s *Simjeongo* (1828).

## Panoramic View Formed by Two Complementary Pavilions

The first thing most of the visiting literati desired to do after crossing Daedonggang River, disembarking the pavilion-boat, passing through Daedongmun Gate, and entering the walled city of Pyeongyang was to visit Yeongwangjeong and Bubyongnu. It was Yeongwangjeong, which was close to Daedongmun Gate, that particularly attracted visitors first starting from the moment they crossed the river. Scholar-officials like Yi Haeung or Bak Saho would recount the literary works left by renowned authors that imbued the structure with historical significance. Various literary works received their attention, such as the plaque saying “Je-il gangsan” (the best of all rivers and mountains 第一江山), which was written by Zhu Zhifan 朱之蕃 (1555–1624), a royal messenger from Ming China to Joseon, and a verse couplet written by the Goryeo poet Kim Hwang-won 金黃元. The wall also displayed plaques of other poems written by well-known literary figures such as Jeong Jisang and Kim Chang-heup.<sup>8</sup>

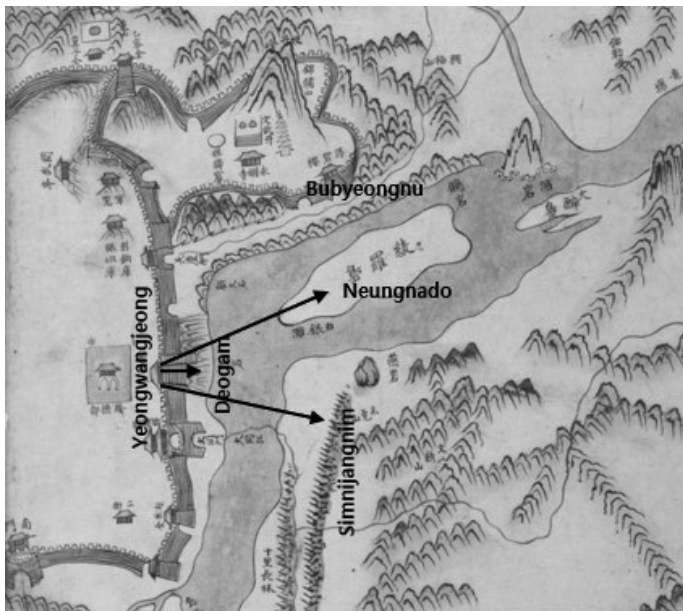


Figure 2. View from Yeongwangjeong Pavilion

8 Yi Haeung, *Gyesan gijeong*, first day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1803; Bak Saho, *Simjeongo*, fifth day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1828.

The biggest interest of the visitors, however, was the role Yeongwangjeong played in their enjoyment of the surrounding landscape.

Heo Bong described the characteristics of the landscape surrounding Yeongwangjeong while narrating its history and location. The following is what he wrote upon climbing up to the pavilion:

I went inside the city walls and up to Yeongwangjeong Pavilion. Since Yeongwangjeong presses down the top of the city walls and the rock beneath it pushes down on the intense rapids below, people of Pyeongyang considered this act good and named the rock beneath as Deogam (Virtuous Rock 德巖) for suppressing the rapid waves. Yeongwangjeong was built by the state councilor Yi Gyemaeng 李繼孟 (1458–1523). Initially, the place was built as a thatched pavilion. Later, Hong Shin 洪愼 and Hong Yeon 洪淵, who were father and son, happened to be appointed as the deputy magistrate of the same region in succession. They continued to polish and adorn Yeongwangjeong until it became the magnificent architecture it is now. The view of the pavilion is best at night, when all three sides of the pavilion are surrounded by nothing but blue waves. Since the blue waves illuminate just like the sky, from a distance it seems as if a broad layer of silk spreads wide over the vast and boundless fields. From above, the space below is so utterly light and clean that it is impossible to make out where it begins and ends. It is hard to express in words whether it is the pavilion or the waves that stands high above the air up there.<sup>9</sup>

Heo Bong mentioned Yeongwangjeong, which soared above the city wall, and Deogam rock beneath, which stood against the harsh waves of Daedonggang River. He then described Yeongwangjeong's exceptional location in great detail: the waves of the Daedonggang River that embraced the three sides of Yeongwangjeong, the light from the sky reflected by the river, and the indescribable beauty of the river that looked like silk spread out when gazed from afar. While Yeongwangjeong alone would have been enough to elicit a stream of compliments, Heo Bong wished to underline the beauty of the overall

9 Heo Bong, *Jochengi*, twenty-second day of the fifth lunar month in the year of 1547: “入城登練光亭。亭壓城頭，其底有巖，能捍狂濤，府人德之，遂名曰德巖。亭舊為李相繼孟所創，始則茅茨而已。其後洪愼、洪淵父子相繼為庶尹，重加賁飾，屹然為一傑。觀亭之勝，最在夜中。試言之，則亭三面蒼蒼然皆水，波光與天為一，遠觀則如匹練交橫於曠莫之野，俯而察之則空明虛淨，就視而不見，莫知端倪。在其上者，竄然如凌虛獨立，不知亭為亭而水為水，有不可以言語形容者也。”

landscape seen from above, which further amplified the pavilion's value and meticulously captured the details of its surroundings.

Yeongwangjeong was frequently used as lodgings for the envoys visiting during the winter. *Yeondo gibaeng* by Prince Inpyeong 麟坪大君 (1622–1658) reveals a unique scenery seen from his window during his overnight stay in Yeongwangjeong. Prince Inpyeong, the third son of King Injo 仁祖 (r.1623–1649), and the younger brother of King Hyojong 孝宗 (r.1649–1659) wrote about Yeongwangjeong on his way to Qing China in 1656.

The fog, which started at dawn, finally lifted after many hours. I stayed here for the day. After washing my face at the break of dawn, I opened all eight windows and looked down at the river flowing before me. The early morning mist had spread toward the riverside, and women were washing silk clothes. That, too, was a scenic sight to behold. The wind started to blow as the day grew dark, clearing up the cloud and mist. I stood up and took in the view around me as I roamed around. The painted fence of the pavilion closely adjoined the city walls, making it look like it was floating in the air. The wave of the big winding river sparkled like silk. From the wild geese quacking on dunes to the mountains sitting sporadically across the field like dots from afar, just about every color presented by the nature was refreshing and beautiful. The place did not earn the reputation as “the best of all rivers and mountains” 第一江山 for nothing.<sup>10</sup>

Prince Inpyeong was able to get a full picture of what was written on a plaque at Yeongwangjeong—“the best of all rivers and mountains”—by seeing the actual sight with his own eyes. Looking at the autumnal scenes outside Yeongwangjeong, the prince could appreciate the unique spatial quality of the pavilion. Being well-versed in paintings, he captured both the morning and evening views from Yeongwangjeong. In the morning, the wet fog and women washing clothes at the riverside came into his view. The evening provided a scene cleared of clouds and mist. Seeing that the railing of Yeongwangjeong was built quite close to the city walls, the prince was hit with a rare feeling of

hanging in the air. He also absorbed other scenes, including the glittering flow of Daedonggang River, wild geese quacking on the sand, and the mountains rising high across the field. To Prince Inpyeong, the views from Yeongwangjeong let him fully take in the rich beauty of the season.

Bubyongnu Pavilion was also considered a great space to take in the nearby landscape and appreciate its beauty. Like from Yeongwangjeong, the visitors were impressed by the river and mountains stretching out in front. The following is a record by Yi Euibong, who was part of a group of envoys in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

When you step down from Juangnu Pavilion 奏樂樓 and go up to Bubyongnu Pavilion after climbing dozens of stone stairs, you will be looking down on a flat island that boasts peculiar views while a long wide river drinking in the vast energy of the sea flows right beneath you. This, added to the scene of the high mountain tops appearing sporadically one by one on the east and south and running through the winding path, will put the paintings of Wang Mojie (王摩詰, 618–907) to shame even if he is reborn.<sup>11</sup>

Yi Euibong felt as if he was staring at a vivid landscape painting as he gazed upon the Daedonggang River down from Bubyongnu, the Neungnado Island that spread out wide and flat in the middle, and the high mountain peaks standing far away in the east and south. In this way, Bubyongnu was regarded as another remarkable spot to enjoy the surrounding landscape.

The natural and manmade landscape forming its surroundings were mentioned more diversely in regard to Bubyongnu compared to Yeongwangjeong. Heo Bong's *Jocheongi* and Yi Haeung's *Gyesan gijeong* provide a detailed description of the main landscape surrounding Bubyongnu Pavilion.

① I went to Bubyongnu because the provincial governor, who had gone earlier, summoned me there. Outside Janggyeongmun Gate 長慶門, stiff cliffs were standing before me like a folding screen. O Hi-maeng 吳希孟 named the cliffs Cheongnyubyek 清流碧. I reached Bubyongnu after

10 Yi Yo 李滄 Prince Inpyeong, *Yeondo gibaeng*, eleventh day of the eighth lunar month in the year of 1656: “曉霧晚晴. 留. 味爽梳洗. 洞開八牕. 俯瞰前江. 曉霧橫渚. 羣娥浣紗. 是亦佳賞. 日晚風起. 霧散雲收. 徘徊獨立. 試觀風景. 畫欄臨城. 勢若浮空. 大江抱回. 波光如練. 沙頭啞啞之雁. 野外點點之山. 多少物色. 極其清麗. 第一江山. 名不虛得.”

11 Yi Euibong, *Bugwollok*, eleventh day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1760: “又自奏樂樓下. 循數十層石梯. 登浮碧樓. 直壓長江納萬頃之灑氣. 俯瞰平嶼擅一區之奇景. 至其東南諸峯. 點點而露. 遂巡而走者. 雖使摩詰復起畫. 不如也.”

walking 3 to 5-*ri* (approximately 1.6 to 2.7 km) along the wall. The pavilion was situated south of Yeongmyeongsa Temple 永明寺, which was also the old site of King Dongmyeong's 東明王 (B.C.37–B.C.19) Gujungung Palace 九梯宮. There were two bridges, Cheongungyo 青雲橋 and Baegungyo 白雲橋, with neat staircases that looked like they were newly built. All these remains are said to have been passed down since the times of King Dongmyeong. Although I have also heard that Giringul Cave 麒麟窟 and Jocheonseok Rock 朝天石 lie within, such is all but absurd. Writers and poets may have written songs and poems about them, but they are nonsensical stories that are hardly worth a glance. Since this building [Bubyeongnu] is not a double-storied structure, some called it Bubyekjeong 浮碧亭.<sup>12</sup> Behind the pavilion stands Moranbong Peak 牧丹峯, and in front, a large river flows around it. The river divides into two parts in front of the pavilion, and at its center lies Neungnado Island 陵羅島. From a distance, one side of a silk window is half exposed between the cliffs. This is Yeongwangjeong. Pine trees and cedar trees stand thick and dense, stretching seemingly endlessly as far as one can see. This is Jaesongjeong 栽松亭 and Jangnim Forest 長林. In the east, Juam Rock 酒巖 rises high above the waters, its form resembling a crouching tiger. In the west stands Eulmildae Pavilion 乙密臺 high up in the forest, seemingly flying in the air, and every part of feature at its left, right, front, and back looks quite odd and mysterious, which offers a sight truly gifted by the heavens. The view of the pavilion is the best in the east. Although I have toured many places, I have never seen a view quite like this. On the east side, another building called Hambyeokdang 涵碧堂 awaits, its serene and exquisite look stealing my heart. The provincial governor held a banquet, placed a white target board at Neungnado Island, and arranged for military officials to pair up and conduct arrow-shooting session. They also prepared food for the feast. Artistic activities such as Pogu Ball Dance 拋球, Hyangbal Cymbal Dance 饗鉞, Mudong Dance of Young Boys 舞童, and Mugo Drum Dance 舞鼓 sounded even louder and noisier than yesterday.<sup>13</sup>

12 In traditional Korean architecture, the suffix “Jeong” 亭 usually indicates a one-storied pavilion while “ru” 樓 indicates a two-storied one.

13 Heo Bong, *Jocheongi*, twenty-third day of the fifth lunar month in the year of 1547: “監司先在浮碧樓邀余, 余往赴。出長慶門, 沿江皆峭壁嵬峨, 若張屏風, 吳希孟名之曰清流壁。循壁行三五里, 方至樓下, 樓在永明寺南, 卽東明王九梯宮遺基。有青雲白雲兩橋, 層級截然如新, 相傳皆東明時舊物也。諺有麒麟窟朝天

② The Bubyongnu Pavilion stands firm and high outside Janggyeongmun Gate, inside Jeongeummun Gate 轉錦門, and east of Yeongmyeongsa Temple. The waves of the river slap against the city walls while the surrounding rock soars up into the sky. Behind the pavilion stands Moranbong Peak; in front lies Neungnado Island. The front pillar of Bubyongnu Pavilion displays a rhyming couplet that reads “A silent shadow sinks within the jade-green light” 靜影沉璧, “while the brightness in the air gushes out in gold” 浮光躍金. When it comes to beautiful and clear views, this pavilion tops all other pavilions in the country. Looking from the east, Jocheonseok Rock touches the blue sky while Eulmildae Pavilion sits across Sonammun Gate 小南門 and is enclosed by the battlement. At the center sits a roundish burial mound called the Grave of Eulmil 乙密. The townspeople made it into a sacrificial ground for the mountain god. We returned to our lodgings, drunk, when it grew dark, past the Deugwollu Pavilion.<sup>14</sup>

The first quotation ①, by Heo Bong, gives a detailed account of Bubyongnu as a perfect place to view the colorful and diverse landscape of the region. The second quotation ②, by Yi Haeung, lists several surrounding spots to emphasize how fitting Bubyongnu is for enjoying the wonderful view. Both accounts put together form the following scene: climbing up to Bubyongnu and taking in the surrounding scenes left and right looking toward the Daedonggang River gives a breathtaking view of the city gates, including Janggyeongmun and Jeongeummun, and gate towers such as Deugwollu Pavilion. Jocheonseok Rock, Juam Rock, Neungnado Island, and other scenic landscapes mingle with the forever-moving waves of the Daedonggang River. Turning away from Bubyongnu to view the castle inside provides a view of Yeongmyeongsa Temple, Moranbong Peak, and Eulmildae Pavilion. Heo Bong stressed how the

石之說, 極荒怪, 而古今詞人至形諸歌詠, 皆浮浪不足觀也。此樓不爲重屋, 故或名之曰浮碧亭。樓後負牧丹峰, 前帶大江, 江至樓前, 歧而爲二, 綾羅之島據其心。遠見綺窓一面半露於層崖者, 練光亭也, 松杉蒼蔚成行, 極目無際者, 栽松亭長林也。東有酒巖, 穹窿奇怪, 狀如伏虎, 西有乙密臺高拱於林表, 其勢欲飛, 左右前後, 莫非奇絕, 殆天作之地也。樓之勝狀, 在東方爲第一。余之所賞多矣, 未有若此者也。東偏有堂曰涵碧, 亦幽絕可愛。監司張宴席, 掛粉侯於綾羅島, 令軍官耦射, 饌具進設, 拋毬饗鉞·舞童舞鼓之伎, 喧闐膠擾, 比昨日尤甚。”

14 Yi Haeung, *Gyesan gijeong*, second day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1803: “樓在長慶門外, 轉錦門內, 永明寺之東畔, 縹緲特出, 江水打堞, 巖壁環轟。背有牧丹峯, 前對綾羅島, 樓之前檻, 有靜影沈璧浮光躍金之聯, 佳麗清勝, 可冠東方樓榭。東望朝天石, 遠混天碧。西有乙密台, 在小南門外, 環以女垣, 中有圓墳形, 或以爲乙密墓, 而邑人遵爲祭山處。夜久酒闌, 歷得月樓而還。”

line of sight could go on forever when looking at the Daedonggang River to the right. The silk-draped window of Yeongwangjeong can be seen about 5-ri away. The Jaesongjeong Pavilion and the lush Simnijangnim Forest, located at the crossing point of the Daedonggang River when approaching Pyeongyang from Junghwa, appear once again to captivate the viewers. Anyone reaching Bubyongnu could admire the natural and artificial landscapes that stretched from southeast to northeast of the walled city of Pyeongyang. Most of the literati visiting Pyeongyang at the time therefore considered Bubyongnu an ideal spot to climb up and look around.

The spots in the quotations above can be understood as separate entities as well as one wide panoramic space formed by connecting them. Bubyongnu lay at the center of the remarkable view that could be appreciated from the route traveling southeast to northeast of the city. As Heo Bong mentioned, installing a target board at Neungnado Island and having people shoot arrows down toward it from Bubyongnu was one of the specialties of the Bubyongnu tour.

Yi Haeung, deeply touched by the unique view at night while looking



Figure 3. View from Bubyongnu Pavilion

around Bubyongnu and Cheongnyubyeok Cliff, expressed his sentiment through a poem in his travel records.

Candlelight burns bright and clear late at night at Bubyongnu,  
 Creating a reversed rainbow at a river ahead.  
 As I climb up and up toward Cheongnyubyeok Cliff, almost 100-cheok high,  
 It feels like flying in the air, mounted on a whirlwind.<sup>15</sup>

(Yi Haeung, "Cheongnyubyeok Cliff")

As the poem above shows, Yi Haeung reached Bubyongnu after climbing up towards the high-risen Cheongnyubyeok Cliff. Rather than feeling out of breath, he felt a sense of ecstasy, as if riding on the wind and soaring to the heavenly world. The trail of sparkling lanterns that lit the Bubyongnu area as the night wore on was another factor that lured visitors like Yi Haeung to Bubyongnu. Merely lighting up Bubyongnu gave birth to another beautiful sight as the lanterns' reflection on the waters of Daedonggang River formed another aesthetic view. The poetic experience of the night view was possible only by touring Bubyongnu.

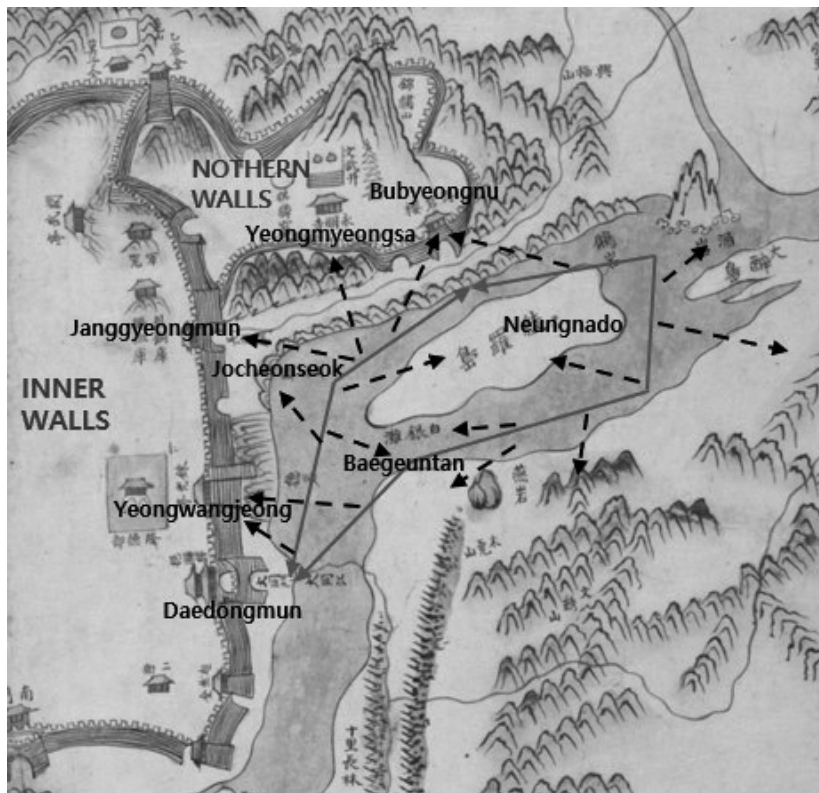
### Main Route for Boat and Sleigh Rides

Literati who visit Pyeongyang from the capital city of Hanyang would first enter the city walls through Daedongmun Gate. After choosing where to stay among the buildings of Seonhwadang 宣化堂, Yeongwangjeong, Yuhyangso (Local Advisory Agency 留鄉所), Daedonggwang 大同館, they would then go out to enjoy the famous landscape. One way to enjoy the view was to go boating. They would depart from Yeongwangjeong, which was in the vicinity of Daedongmun Gate, and arrive at Bubyongnu, next to the Jeongeumun Gate, while admiring the scenic sights around them. Daedongmun was the eastern gate of the inner walls of Pyeongyang, and Jeongeumun was the southern gate of the northern walls of the city, which was located northeast of Yeongwangjeong. When the river froze in the winter, people would replace the boats with sleighs.

15 Yi Haeung, *Gyesan gijeong*, second day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1803: <清流壁>, “碧樓深夜燭玲瓏, 倒作前江一道虹. 百尺登登清壁路, 吾行疑是駕璇風.”



Whether by boat or sleigh, the literati touring the route from Yeongwangjeong to Bubyongnu could take in the view from below the city walls as they looked up at the buildings and the surrounding landscape. There were natural landscapes, such as the enormous rocks of Deogam and Jocheonseok, and artificial landscapes, such as architectures like Bubyongnu, Yeongwangjeong, and Yeongmyeongsa. They would take in views of Neungnado Island, which lay in front of the Bubyongnu, and also drown themselves in the mystic mood of the waters as the boat sailed through the waves of Daedonggang River. Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong was not only a place that offered pleasurable views of the exquisite landscape but also an excellent background for boating and sleighing.



**Figure 4.** View while Boating or Sleighing

\* Boating or sleighing route (—→)

\* Direction of gaze (- - →)

In 1731, the literatus Hwang Taek-hu (1687–1737) recited the poem below during his boat ride from Yeongwangjeong to Bubyongnu while accompanying Yi Jongseong 李宗城 (1692–1759), the royal censor of Pyeongando Province, to Pyeongyang.

Little by little, a boating song spreads.  
 Clear weather lifts the cloud and mist on the river.  
 Loud splashing sounds resonate on a sandy island where silk is being washed,  
 A rocky site where a fishing rod is cast displays a deep green hue, the color of a willow.  
 Everything that jumps to my eyes is a recipe to write a poem,  
 Here we raise our wine cups even when we are in the Northwest.  
 By the time the temple building looks even brighter,  
 We shall take a seat and wait till the sound of the evening bell.<sup>16</sup>  
 (Hwang Take-hu, “Going Upstream from Yeongwangjeong to Bubyongnu”)

Yeongwangjeong and Bubyongnu served as an essential background to Hwang Taek-hu’s boat ride along Daedonggang River. The poem tells how the cloud and mist rolled away as they moved along on a boat, opening up the idyllic scenes around them. Hwang Take-hu slowly immersed himself into the poetic experience while listening to the sounds of water on Neungnado Island and gazing at the willow trees nearby the Cheongnyubeok Cliff. The poem also describes how he waited for the sound of the evening bell while looking towards Yeongmyeongsa Temple, where Bubyongnu Pavilion was. The lines show that he has fallen even deeper into a tranquil and sentimental mood.

Yi Deok-mu (1741–1793), another late 18<sup>th</sup>-century literatus of Joseon, savored the atmosphere of the spring through the sight of ripening barley as he gazed at Bubyongnu from a boat.

Rounding the side corner of Bubyongnu,  
 I can vaguely make out the red pillars.  
 Encountering white herons roaming about at a leisurely pace  
 I imagine a dragon that lives in quiet peace.  
 While the rising tide continuously rolls into the lonesome castle,  
 the flapping sail is completely soaked with rain.

16 Hwang Taek-hu, *Hwagokjip*, vol. 3: <自練光亭泝流上浮碧樓>, “稍稍棹歌發, 新晴江霧開. 沙暄浣紗渚, 柳暗釣魚臺. 滿目皆詩料, 出關猶酒杯. 寺樓更瀟灑, 坐待暝鐘來.”

Gazing at the fresh green barley of Neungnado Island,  
I pause my rowing for a second to behold the hard-working farmers with envy.<sup>17</sup>  
(Yi Deok-mu, “Seasonable Rain Showers While Gazing at Bubyongnu from a Boat”)

This undated poem shows how the boating trip presented a lively picture of spring around Bubyongnu. When Yi Deok-mu took a boat from Yeongwangjeong and went around the corner by the river, the first thing he noticed from afar was the hazy red pillars of Bubyongnu. His eyes then moved to the scenic site below the pavilion. He saw white herons wandering leisurely and the waves rising beneath the cliff due to the incoming tide. He also noted a barley field wholly soaked by the spring shower. Finally, he appreciated the scene of farmers at Neungnado Island with hopes of their fresh new barley. To Yi Deok-mu, Bubyongnu served as the background of boating that enriched the bountiful sight of spring.

Hong Yangho (1724–1802) also went boating from Yeongwangjeong up to Bubyongnu when he was appointed Governor of Pyeongando Province in 1791.

Floating on a boat along Daedonggang River like an immortal god,  
The drizzle stopped, and the sunset began.  
The brightest moon of the year rises above past the day of the full moon.  
As the fresh wind blows at night, the time has come for the flow of the Big Fire star 大火.  
The fantastic scenery of Giringul Cave rivals that of Chibi Red Cliff 赤壁,  
The jade bamboo flute of the present follows the line of Su Zizhan’s 蘇子瞻 excursion.  
As we row on the moonlight reflected on the river, we see the Milky Way swaying beneath,  
Every manifestation of nature floating on the deep river stretches vast and endless.<sup>18</sup>  
(Hong Yangho, “Going up Daedonggang River Towards Bubyongnu on the 16<sup>th</sup>  
Day of the 7<sup>th</sup> Month”)

Hong Yangho went on an excursion to Bubyongnu on the sixteenth day of the seventh lunar month, knowing that it was precisely the same day Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101) of Song China wrote “Chibi Fu” 赤壁賦. Traveling from

Daedongmun Gate to Bubyongnu, he felt honored to experience what Su Shi had as well. He gazed at the bright moonlit river as he listened to the jade bamboo flute play. His boat passed Cheongnyubeok Cliff, where Giringul Cave was. The route from Yeongwangjeong to Bubyongnu felt ideal to feel the atmosphere of the autumn night. He had already visited the place thirty years ago, in 1763, while serving as the magistrate of Uiju, Pyeongando Province. He had taken the same route and written a poem titled “I Went up Bubyongnu Along with the Deputy Envoy, Took a Boat Down to Daedongmun Gate, and Went East Across the River.”<sup>19</sup> The poem quoted above shows how Hong Yangho had the pleasure of touring the Daedonggang route from Bubyongnu to Yeongwangjeong one bright, clear autumn night, enveloped by the mystical mood of the moonlight and a touch of instrumental music.

Seo Yeongbo (1759–1816) also wrote a related poem in 1796, when he was thirty-eight years old, after traveling from Daedongmun Gate to Bubyongnu, past the Baegeuntan Rapids 白銀灘. He wrote down his sentiments on the boat ride back to Daedongmun after enjoying a drink at Bubyongnu.<sup>20</sup> His writings mention the scenery around Bubyongnu of that moonlit night. Han Jangseok (1832–1894) wrote a poem around 1874 on his way back from Bubyongnu inside a boat in the rain past Cheongnyubeok Cliff. He was touring the place with Jo Seongha 趙成夏 (1845–1881), the governor of Pyeongando Province at the time.<sup>21</sup> Han Jangseok sang about the joy of taking in the paradisiacal scenes that spread out wide around Bubyongnu and the charms of enjoying music and liquor on the boat.

Meanwhile, sleighing offered a different kind of delight to the literati as they glided through the frozen rivers connecting Yeongwangjeong and Bubyongnu during the winter season. Yi Euibong, who was part of the group of royal envoys to China, rode a sleigh to the frozen Daedonggang River. He went from Daedongmun Gate near Yeongwangjeong to Jeongeummun Gate

19 Hong Yangho, *Igyejip*, vol. 3: <携亞使登浮碧樓 舟下大同門 渡江而東>，“樓船畫泛大江流，秋水連天積翠浮。萬象涵虛光不定，游魚吹浪意相留。歌聲落水汀雲起，舞袖翻空夕靄收。日暮芳洲分袂去，烟波無限送人愁。”

20 Seo Yeongbo, *Jukseokgwan yujip*, book 1: <浪江 與按使朴丈同舟 泝白銀灘 登浮碧樓小酌 乘月回舟下大同門 按使先唱 次韻>，“笙簫泛舸泝灘輕，浮碧樓高倚晚晴。攪漚清風排暑氣，開顏他席話鄉情。紅亭曲曲臨脩渚，畫戟遲遲度半城。明月長林迴棹好，絃歌擊汰鏡光平。”

21 Han Jangseok, *Misan seonsaeng munjip*, vol. 2: <從按使登浮碧樓 遇風雨 同舟下大同江 約未到清流壁題詩 詩成 夜已三鼓(按使趙公成夏)>，“一生湖海遠遊心，分外追隨別境尋。錦纜關風將上下，山樓急雨忽晴陰。羅裙送酒當盃月，玉管隨波起渚禽。詎獨宦緣萍水喜，政清却似此江深。”

17 Yi Deok-mu, *Cheongjangwan jeonso*, vol. 10: <舟中望浮碧樓 時雨益密>，“浮碧樓稜轉，模糊辨柱形。乍逢閒步鷺，凝想靜居龍。孤郭迎潮整，亂帆入雨濃。青青綾島麥，停棹羨明農。”

18 Hong Yangho, *Igyejip*, vol. 7: <七月既望 泛舟浪江 泝上浮碧樓>，“大同江上泛仙舟，微雨新晴夕靄收。一年明月中元後，半夜清風大火流。麟窟爭如赤壁勝，玉簫今繼子瞻遊。空明擊汰星河動，積水無邊萬象浮。”

and walked around Bubyongnu and Yeongmyeongsa Temple. It was the morning of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, 1760.

The weather was cold and clear....I felt jolly, as if I could fly, taking off on a sleigh, leaving my horse behind at Daedongmun Gate. The sunlight finally came through right at that moment, and when it shone down on the icy ground, I could see the shadow of the mountain and the movement of the water beneath flickering on the hem of my clothes. Watching the pavilions and castles around me, I felt as if I had entered a crystal world....After returning to the Yeongmyeongsa Temple, I went to Jeongeummun Gate and rode the sleigh again. In a blink of an eye, I reached Daedongmun Gate, where my horse was already waiting for me.<sup>22</sup>

Despite the cold weather, the sleigh ride brought Yi Euibong no less joy than the boating experience. As the sleigh took off, he immediately felt cheerful. The morning rays of the sun reflected off the frozen lake, while the pavilions and castles made him feel as if he were inside a magical crystal world. All these were described as a particular delight attainable by admiring the scenery from the side of the walled city while gliding upwards from Yeongwangjeong to Bubyongnu.

Jo Hyeonmyeong 趙顯命 (1690–1752), one of the literati during the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, wrote a poem about his experience going up Bubyongnu on a sleigh.

After riding on an armored horse, banners busily flapping all morning,  
The music heard from the sleigh at night sounds slow and leisurely.  
While all kinds of fish remain quiet underwater,  
The moon and the stars are in full glow right above our heads.  
Bubyongnu over there looked dreamy in the distance,  
Then suddenly, I find Neungnado Island standing right before me.  
As I advance to the red railing, the singing and dancing starts,  
With a pretty girl coming around to pour me red pine pollen wine.<sup>23</sup>  
(Jo Hyeonmyeong, “Towards Bubyongnu on a Sleigh up a Frozen River One Moonlit Night”)

22 Yi Euibong, *Bugwollok*, eleventh day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1760: “晴寒....出大同門，舍騎乘雪馬，輕快如飛。時朝暎方昇，直射水腹，山影水氣，搖澗襟裾。周視樓臺，城廓恍在水晶世界中....還永明寺，出轉錦門，復乘雪馬，一瞥到大同門，騎已待矣。”

23 Jo Hyeonmyeong, *Gwirokji*, vol. 2: <水江月夜 乘雪馬 向浮碧樓>，“朝馳鉄馬旌旗亂，夜御氷車鼓吹長。水底魚龍皆寂寞，頭邊星月共輝光。遙看浮碧樓如夢，忽覺綾罷島在傍。却上朱欄動歌舞，小娥擊進露紅觴。”

One cold, bright winter day, Jo Hyeonmyeong went out to enjoy a sleigh ride. He seems to have left from Daedongmun Gate near Yeongwangjeong. This route would have provided a view of Bubyongnu in the distance. Despite the freezing weather, he describes having a splendid time at night. While gazing dreamily at Bubyongnu lighten up afar by the rays of the moon and stars, he was surprised to reach Neungnado Island before he even knew it. The poem shows how he considered his swift arrival at the island and Bubyongnu on a sleigh a novel experience. He ends by describing in a merry mood the winter night when he enjoyed songs and dances performed at Bubyongnu.

In sum, Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong was an important background for the scenic sights that could be enjoyed around the walled city of Pyeongyang on boat or sleigh. The literati regarded the route from Yeongwangjeong to Bubyongnu as a significant passageway to enjoy the landscape around Pyeongyang and the Daedonggang River.

### An Essential Place to Enjoy Music, Songs, and Banquets

Envoys headed to China constantly had the diplomatic documents they were bringing reviewed through an extra confirmation process called *sadae* 查對. The process occurred in Hwangju, Pyeongyang, Anju, and Uiju. After this process, they were granted an opportunity to tour the famous places in that region and enjoy other forms of entertainment. The administrators of each region would hold special banquets for these envoys with singing and dancing performed by female entertainers (Jo 2017, 8–9).

During the Joseon Dynasty, the office of the governor of Pyeongando Province was located in Pyeongyang, where local goods were abundant. Envoys stopping by during their trip to the northwest enjoyed even more special treatment from the local government offices. If they had the time, the envoys went sightseeing around the region, visiting historical sites such as the grave of Gija 箕子 and the remains of King Dongmyeong of Goguryeo. Of course, Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong were among the top viewing spots to relish in music and banquets.

The two paintings *Banquet at Bubyongnu* and *Banquet at Yeongwangjeong*, which are part of a three-panel painting series called *Welcoming Banquet for the Governor of Pyeongando* and drawn by the late-Joseon artist Kim Hongdo 金弘道

(1745–?) in 1785, portray scenes of the banquet and musical performances. As the title suggests, the banquet was dedicated to the newly appointed governor of Pyeongando Province. The paintings provide a good clue as to what the entertainment offered to the envoys and other literati groups might have been like. *Banquet at Bubyongnu* portrays dances and musical performances being performed in the front yard of Bubyongnu, including a group of female entertainers dancing to the music of Cheoyongmu, or Cheoyong Dance. *Banquet at Yeongwangjeong* shows two female entertainers dancing, facing each other, along with the Lion Dance. Both paintings feature musicians equipped with traditional instruments such as *jjwago* (seated drum 座鼓), *janggo* (hourglass drum 長鼓), *daegeum* (horizontal bamboo flute 大琴), *piri* (cylindrical double-reed bamboo oboe 鶯箏), *haegeum* (two-stringed fiddle 奚琴), and *bak* (wooden clapper with six slabs 拍) (Hwang 2003, 754).

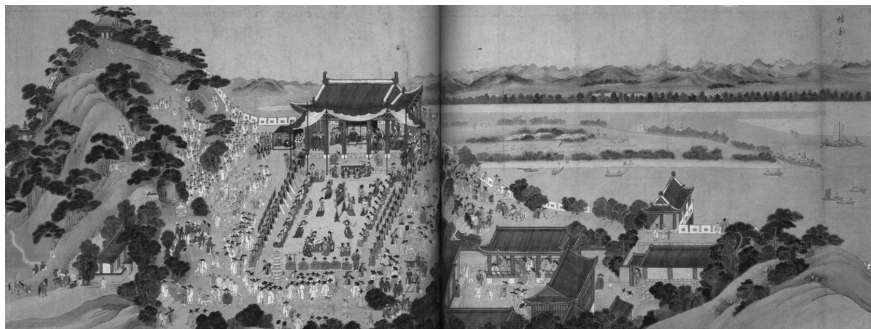


Figure 5. *Banquet at Bubyongnu* by Kim Hongdo, National Museum of Korea

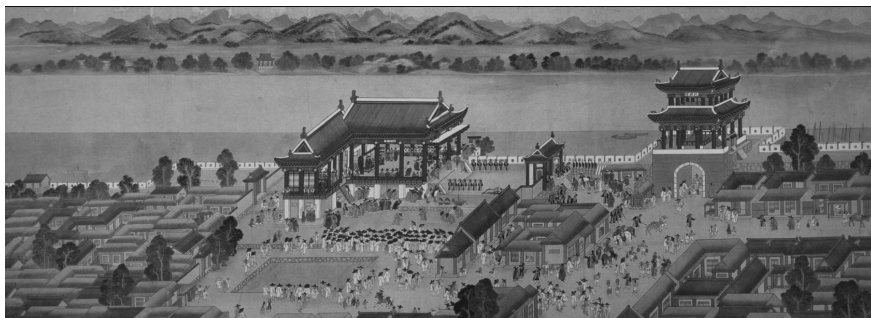


Figure 6. *Banquet at Yeongwangjeong* by Kim Hongdo, National Museum of Korea

The envoys visiting Pyeongyang on their way to China were highly respected and thus enjoyed the most privileges compared to other visiting literati groups. They would have been treated to a banquet on a similar scale to the welcoming banquet for the governor of Pyeongando, complete with songs, dances, and other forms of musical performances. As long as it was not in the middle of a national mourning period, the province never failed to entertain visitors in either Yeongwangjeong or Bubyongnu, whether they were high-ranking officials such as the king's envoys or other literati. The quotations below are records by royal envoys of the banquets and music performances at Yeongwangjeong.

- ① At Yeongwangjeong, I always feel like the water level is the same as that of the railing of the pavilion. This is because the water's surface is vast, while the level of the pavilion is just right. I have just found out the reason. Many pavilions are erected close to the river, but it is almost impossible to build them this way. The moon rose not long after that, filling the river with golden waves as the assistant magistrate arranged the musical performance. When they lit the candles inside silk shade lanterns and hung them up on the rafter, the place brightened up like day.<sup>24</sup>
- ② I stayed in Pyeongyang. After the envoys gathered at Yeongwangjeong for the confirmation process of the diplomatic documents, a music performance was held.<sup>25</sup>
- ③ When the three envoys were done with their document confirmation process, their host prepared a music performance for them at Yeongwangjeong. The railings had open views, so one could look down on the waves and get a full view of the outstanding landscape. The framed board on the front read featured the four-character phrase "Je-il gangsan" (The best of all rivers and mountains 第一江山). There was also a separate verse couplet written on planks on the pillars reading "At one

24 Kim Changeop, *Yeonhaeng ilgi*, twelfth day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1712: "從前每坐此亭, 水與檻平, 蓋江面闊, 而亭之高低得中故也, 今來始覺其所以然. 他亭臨江者亦多, 而不能如此. 須與月生, 金波滿江. 庶尹張妓樂, 以青紅紗籠燭懸于梁, 光明如晝."

25 Seo Yumun, *Muo yeonhaengnok*, twenty-eighth day of the tenth lunar month in the year of 1798: "평양 머므다. 삼스신이 홉가지로 련광정의 모히여 사티 하고 기악을 베프니라."

side of a long castle wall, waves run over” 長城一面溶溶水 and “In the east of the wide open field, high-risen mountains appear dotted” 大野東頭點點山. These were written by the Chinese envoy Zhu Zhifan. The poem summed up the overall aspect of the place so well that it became a maxim of the landscape to this day. Among the female entertainers, there were women who could sing the song of a departing ship 離舟曲 and perform the whirlwind dance 旋風舞. People said they were the best out of all the towns along the route of our journey.<sup>26</sup>

- ④ In the evening, I paid a visit to the provincial governor, Sim Neung-ak 沈能岳 (1766-?), who also happened to be my distant uncle and then went to the lodgings of the head envoy at Yeongwangjeong with the deputy envoy. There was a huge musical performance that went on well late into the night. Although people say that it is worth taking the time to see the female entertainers of Pyeongyang, those who came to meet me were only country bumpkins. None of the women I once knew were currently active. To me, all the red petals have fallen, and what is left were only green leaves. Though I am perfectly aware that time flies swiftly in the world like a drifting cloud, this seemed all the more so for the female entertainers, and I was not pleased by that at all. Since the girls who took the leading roles in singing and dancing were all born after 1815, they were indeed “planted after Liu Lang” 劉郎去後栽.<sup>27</sup> If you dare ask how the banquet was to one truly refined in taste, it would not be all that harsh to point out that one has seen better days with better women.<sup>28</sup>

Kim Changeop wrote the first quotation above ① on the twelfth day of the

eleventh month in 1712, when he was part of a royal envoy group to China together with his older brother Kim Changjip. While gazing at the waves of Daedonggang River swaying under the moonlight, Kim Changeop enjoyed the musical performance at Yeongwangjeong offered by the local government of Pyeongyang. The description of lanterns hanging on the rafters imply that the banquet hall was well equipped with lighting facilities. Seo Yumun composed the second quotation ② on the twenty-eighth day of the tenth month in 1796. After completing the document confirmation process by the royal envoys, a musical performance took place at Yeongwangjeong. Yi Haeung wrote the third quotation ③ on the first day of the eleventh month in 1803. As did Kim Changeop, Yi Haeung also mentioned the excellent view observed from Yeongwangjeong. He specifically mentioned how the musical performances offered that night, including the song of a departing ship and the whirlwind dance, made a lasting impression on him. Kim Gyeongseon composed the fourth quotation ④ on the twenty-ninth day of the tenth month in 1832. As his description writes, the music performance at Yeongwangjeong went on late into the night. This was the first time Kim Gyeongseon had visited Pyeongyang in 18 years. His first visit was with his father, who had been appointed as an official in Pyeongyang. In his writing, he compares the musical performance of the past and present. Unlike the others, he evaluates the artistic skills of the female entertainers, pointing out how the current entertainers did not quite measure up to their predecessors in terms of skill.

The quotations above are records of the royal envoys' experiences in Pyeongyang and were written between late in the tenth lunar month and early in the eleventh lunar month of the year. Since it was already winter, all the banquets and musical performances took place in the hall of Yeongwangjeong. Yeongwangjeong seems to have been chosen for the gathering since it was already serving as accommodation for the envoys and thus saved people the trouble of moving from one building to another in the cold weather. Bubyongnu's location, which was relatively far from the inner walls of Pyeongyang, probably made it less ideal for receiving guests to stay the night or preparing a banquet. Most literary works of musical performances or other gatherings at Bubyongnu consequently were usually reserved for those visiting around spring to autumn, when the weather was milder.

Seong Hyeon 成覲 (1439–1504), a literary figure of the early Joseon period, was appointed to serve in Pyeongyang for a term. He held banquets

26 Yi Haeung, *Gyesan gijeong*, first day of the eleventh lunar month in the year of 1803: “三使行查對訖, 設妓樂于練光, 臨水軒飲, 江山形勝皆屬眼景. 扁楣有第一江山四字, 又柱聯有曰, 長城一面溶溶水, 大野東頭點點山. 是朱使之蕃筆, 蓋模寫全形, 為千古格語. 妓有離舟曲·旋風舞, 為沿邑最.”

27 This is an expression of how fleeting life is. Liu Lang refers to Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫 (772–842), a Tang poet who returned to the capital city of Chang'an after being released from his relegation to Langzhou 郎州. He saw some 1,000 new peach trees newly planted at Xuanduguan Taoist Temple 玄都觀 while he was gone. Looking at the peaches, Liu, in his poem, sang, “They were all planted after the departure of Liu Lang” 盡是劉郎去後栽. See Liu Yuxi, *Collected Works of Liu Binke*, vol. 24: <戲贈看花諸君子>.

28 Kim Gyeongseon, *Yeonwon jikji*, twenty-ninth day of the tenth lunar month in the year of 1832: “夕間往見道伯沈戚叔能岳, 仍與副使往練光亭正使所. 大張妓樂, 夜深而罷. 浪上花柳, 素稱可觀, 舊日所觀, 無一在籍, 間或來見者, 皆成村樣. 深紅落盡, 綠葉成陰, 浮世光陰, 何處不忙, 而為此輩似較甚, 令人不樂. 擅場歌舞者, 皆是乙亥後所生, 真所謂劉郎去後栽者, 若使知趣者評品, 謂之遜於前輩, 恐非太苛.”

at Bubyongnu for the envoys returning from honoring the birthday of the Chinese emperor in China and recounted the event in his poem.

Leaning on the high pavilion, I stared vacantly into the far distance,  
The oars of the boat move, following the river that flows downwards.  
What a beautiful night, thanks to the bright moon of the Harvest Moon Festival!  
It is a wondrous tour accompanying those returning home from a journey  
of ten thousand miles.  
As the sound of the iron flute carried by the breeze permeates across the cliff,  
Women with red makeup hold the candlelight to brighten the shore.  
With feelings pouring out endlessly through thousands of wine barrels,  
Those who are joyous continue to be joyous, while those who are sad continue  
to be sad.<sup>29</sup>

(Seong Hyeon, “On the Fifteenth, Envoys who Honored the Emperor’s  
Birthday Returned From Beijing, so I Greeted Them at Bubyongnu with  
Songs and Musical Performances Ready and then Took a Boat and Sailed  
Down the River Under the Moonlight”)

From Seong Hyeon’s account of receiving the envoys and holding a banquet for them on their way back home from China, it is likely that this took place when he was serving as the governor of Pyeongando Province. Seong Hyeon was appointed as Governor in the second month of 1486 at age forty-eight. Since the poem also mentions the mid-autumn harvest festival, the event most likely occurred on the fifteenth day of the eighth month. He brought female entertainers and musicians to the boat and held a feast at Bubyongnu, letting the envoys relish the moment of songs, dances, and other refined pleasures. Bubyongnu played the role of a perfect background for fancy gatherings and enjoyment of music and dance while basking in the bright moonlight of the mid-autumn night.

The banquet at Bubyongnu also appears in *Buyeon ilgi*, which was written by Yi Jaeheup in the early nineteenth century.

The weather was clear. I stayed in Pyeongyang. At noon I took a boat and

sailed up to Bubyongnu to watch the sword dance and then moved to the Deugwollu Pavilion at Yeongmyeongsa Temple to take a break. Afterwards, I climbed up Moranbong Peak to look at Eulmildae Pavilion and Gija’s Grave. The sun was down when I returned to my lodging through Janggyeongmun Gate.<sup>30</sup>

This was recorded on the twenty-second day of the fourth month in 1828. When Yi Jaeheup stayed in Pyeongyang, the weather was warm enough to prepare a feast and musical performances at Bubyongnu. The sword dance Yi Jaeheup’s traveling party saw had been officially staged at the government banquet in Pyeongando Province during the eighteenth century and spread across the nation. The dance was one of the representative art genres of Pyeongando Province and a must-see performance for envoys dropping by the region on their way home from China. With landscapes such as Moranbong Peak, Daedonggang River, and Neungnado Island playing the background, the performances at Bubyongnu would have benefited from the additional rich colors of the backstage. Bubyongnu thus was the perfect stage to hold banquets and musical performances for the enjoyment of the visiting literati.

## Conclusion

During the Joseon dynasty, Bubyongnu and Yeongwangeong stood as the two representative pavilions in the northwestern region of the Korean Peninsula. They were also known as the birthplace of numerous literary works, inspiring countless literati groups who toured the area. Even today, these two places, which have been designated as national treasures in North Korea, maintain their fame. This article has analyzed the travel records of the Joseon Dynasty and other poems and prose to find out how the two pavilions managed to captivate literary figures over time and examined how these cultural spaces were used. The research provides an explanation of how the two pavilions could remain a background to several literary works for a long time. The article can be summarized as follows.

29 Seong Hyeon, *Heobaekdang sijip*, vol. 12: <十五夜 千秋使回自京師 余備歌吹往邀浮碧樓 乘月順流而下>，“徙倚高樓縱遠眸，又搖蘭棹泛江流。中秋月白當良夜，萬里人回作勝遊。鐵笛和風穿絕壁，紅粧執燭耀長洲。千鍾百榼情無盡，歡者自歡愁自愁。”

30 Yi Jaeheup, *Buyeon ilgi*, twenty second day of the forth lunar month in the year of 1828: “晴. 留平壤. 午後拖舟上浮碧樓觀劍舞，移憩于永明寺之得月樓，又上牡丹峯，望乙密臺箕子墓，由長慶門，暮還于次。”

First, the literati group who left the capital city of Hanyang usually entered the walled city of Pyeongyang by riding on a boat named Seungbyeokjeong at the Daedonggang River. In most cases, the two pavilions were the first two features to come into view at the crossing point of the river, making a lasting impression on newcomers. Visitors could take in an entire picture of the route of the eastern and northeastern sections of the city, stretching from Daedongmun Gate of the inner walls to the Jeongeummun Gate of the northern walls, at this point. Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong would have stood out since they stood high above the city walls from a distance. They would have appeared as the leading sceneries of Pyeongyang and further piqued the interest of the visitors in their upcoming tour.

Second, visitors did not hesitate to make the efforts to reach the high-risen pavilions of Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong in order to take in the beauty of the surrounding landscape. Yeongwangjeong was the perfect place to look down on Deogam Rock, the rising and falling waves of Daedonggang River, the southern view of Neungnado Island, and Simnijangnim Forest. Bubyongnu allowed open views of the far-reaching landscape including Yeonggwangjeong and Simnijangnim Forest together with nearby sights such as Neungnado Island, Cheongnyubyeok Cliff, and Janggyeongmun Gate. The gaze around also offered scenic sights of Yeongmyeongsa Temple in the vicinity, Moranbong Peak, and Eulmildae Pavilion far away, ultimately presenting an extensive panoramic landscape for all to appreciate.

Third, the 5-*ri* (approximately 2.7 km) section from Daedongmun Gate to Jeongeummun Gate was famous for boating or sleighing depending on the weather. People enjoyed looking up at Yeongwangjeong and Bubyongnu rising above the city walls while moving across the river. The rides let them admire the two structures from various angles, both near and far, as they blended in with Neungnado Island and the rock cliff.

Fourth, Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong were widely used to hold banquets and musical performances for the literati visiting Pyeongyang. The two pavilions sat against the backdrops of the scenic landscape, which was embraced by the long and winding Daedonggang River. Their positions functioned as the backstage to the banquets and performances, further livening up the atmosphere. Such circumstances inspired visitors to write prose and poems about the place.

As this article shows, Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong provided

incredible landscapes for the literati of the Joseon Dynasty to gaze upon and enjoy in various ways. As a result, they have been able to keep up their fame as the top scenic pavilions in the nation. Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong functioned as a medium and inspiration for literary figures to continue to share the panoramic views and their artistic experiences through poetry and prose.

Discussions of cultural geography have grown more active recently, as more attention is being given to how geographic factors could inspire literary writings. I hope this research on the spatial use of Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong can further the discussion on the literary contextualization of geographical space and contribute to systemizing the literary-geographical discourse in the area of classical poetry and prose.

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## Abstract

This article looks into the two notable pavilions of the walled city of Pyeongyang, the Bubyongnu and the Yeongwangjeong, and their enjoyment by literary figures of the Joseon Dynasty. Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong became famous as the first memorable sight one would encounter just before crossing Daedonggang River to enter the walled city of Pyeongyang. The two pavilions were also perceived as an ideal spot to view the natural surroundings of the river. Whenever a literati group went on a tour, either on a boat or a sleigh, they always enjoyed watching the two splendidly risen pavilions from various angles. Literary figures visiting Pyeongyang enjoyed refined arts such as elegant banquets and musical performances at Bubyongnu and Yeongwangjeong. As a medium to rejoice in various scenic views and art performances, the two pavilions ultimately became crucial in inspiring the creation of poetry and prose in the region.

**Keywords:** walled city of Pyeongyang, Bubyongnu, Yeongwangjeong, Daedonggang River, landscape enjoyment

