

## **Digitalization of and New Research Trends in *Hojeokdaejang* from the Late Joseon Dynasty\***

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### **Digitalization of the *Hojeokdaejang* (Census Registry Book)**

Digitalization of historical materials is becoming one of the new trends in the world of history today. Digitalization signifies quite a change for historians who are so used to manual data analysis, and its effects doubtful. When the *Joseon wangjo sillok* (朝鮮王朝實錄, Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty) was digitalized, there were many historians who became concerned about the ill-effects that might result from easy access to historical data in that the entire outline or the currents of the era would not be understood when only portions of information necessary to the researcher are looked into.

Nonetheless, no one can deny the positive effect of easy access to data. Thoroughness of data analysis is an issue pertaining to the individual historian; easy access to computerized data does not destroy the thoroughness of analysis. Digitalization of the *Veritable Records* led to digitalization of authentic history books such as the *Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms* and *Goryeosa* (History of Goryeo) as well as other types of literary collections.<sup>1</sup> Lately, the public is sometimes allowed to access original materials such as digital pictures or computerized data.

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1. See Noh Yeong-gu 2003 on digitalization of historical materials.

Most important in the process of digitalizing history books and literary collections is entering accurate translations and original data. Adhering to a certain format based on the type of data in some cases, however, takes more precedence than translating the data. A framework for electronic inputting must first be established for materials like the *bangmok* (list of successful candidates in the higher civil service examination), *jokbo* (lineage books), and the *hojeokdaejang* (census registry book) so that search fields as well as statistical analysis can be set up. The *hojeokdaejang* is the most difficult for which a digital framework can be established due to the immensity and diversity of data contained within.

The *Hojeokdaejang* Research Team at Sungkyunkwan University began in 1999 to establish a framework for the digitalization process of the *Danseong hojeokdaejang*, and it took over a year to finish this task.<sup>2</sup> Then the team faced the issue of entering and revising a great amount of data after the framework was established. Even after the layout was completed, there also remained the problem of entering and revising enormous amount of data. Those who realized the historical value contained within it early on such as Shima Mutsuhiko (嶋陸奥彦) and the team led by Professor Chung Doo-hee of Sogang University could only digitalize portions of some parts of the Daegu and Danseong *hojeokdaejang* due to the vastness of data. It took five long years for the Team at Sungkyunkwan University to enter the entire data of *Danseong hojeokdaejang*.<sup>3</sup>

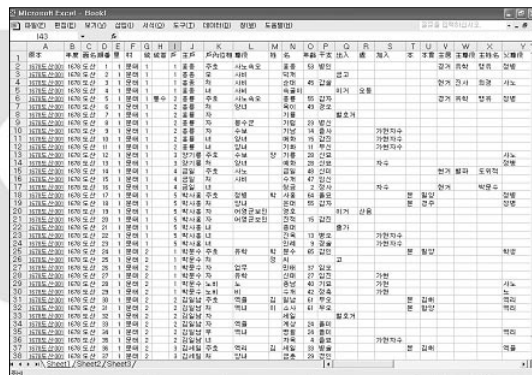
For the convenience of operating various functions on search and statistics, Korean characters were used to enter data, and original text is linked to allow immediate view of both the original as well as input data. Each individual is designated as one record with information on head of the family,<sup>4</sup> wife, and family members, etc., and each record is once again divided into thirty-seven fields as follows:

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2. The *Hojeokdaejang* Research Team, which is supported by the Academy of East Asian Studies at Sungkyunkwan University, is a study team that initially began with sixteen socioeconomic history scholars of the Joseon period affiliated with a new research division of the Organization of Korean Historians. All references to the “*Hojeokdaejang* Research Team” will hereinafter be referred to as “the Team.”
  3. On December 19, 2003, the Team introduced the *Danseong hojeokdaejang* on CD-ROM, *Gyeongsangdo danseonghyeon sahoejaryojip* (Collection of Materials on the Danseong Prefecture Society in Gyeongsang Province) Vol. 3, and *Danseong hojeokdaejang yeongu* (Research on Danseong *Hojeokdaejang*) Vol. 1 to the academic world; an international conference was held as well.
  4. The Team claims that the existing term “*hoju*” must be changed to “*juho*.” See Kim Kuen-tae (2003a: 144-147) and Jeong Jin-yeong (2003: 186-187) for more details.

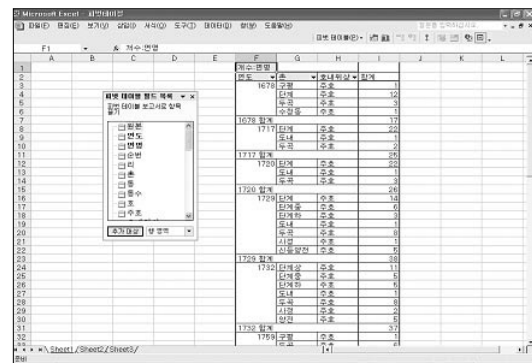
1. *Weonbon* (原本): Original page of the individual from the *hojeokdae-  
jang*. Linked to a digitalized picture.
2. *Yeondo* (年度): Year of registration with the *hojeokdaejang*.
3. *Myeonmyeong* (面名): Town name.
4. *Sunbeon* (順番): Ordinal number of the individual on the *hojeokdae-  
jang*.
5. *Li* (里): Ordinal number of the village.
6. *Chonmyeong* (村名): Village name.
7. *Tong* (統): Ordinal number of the region.
8. *Tongsu* (統首): Designated term for the regional head.
9. *Ho* (戶): Ordinal number of the family.
10. *Juho* (主戶): Family head.
11. *Honaewisang* (戶內位相): Each individual's relationship to the *juho*.
12. *Jigyeok* (職役): Taxable status of each individual.
13. *Seong* (姓): Last name of each individual.
14. *Myeong* (名): First name of each individual.
15. *Yeollyeong* (年齡): Age of each individual.
16. *Ganji* (干支): Year of birth of each individual in the sexagenary cycle.
17. *Churip* (出入): Transferring in of an individual's *hojeok*.
18. *Cheo* (處): New *hojeok* in which a transferred individual is registered.
19. *Gaip* (加入): New registration in the *hojeok*.
20. *Bon* (本): Distinction between “*bon*” and “*jeok*.”
21. *Bongwan* (本貫): Family origin of the individual.
22. *Jugeo* (主居): Address of slave-owner.
23. *Jujigyeok* (主職役): Taxable status of slave-owner.
24. *Jusongmyeong* (主姓名): Name of slave-owner.
25. *Bujigyeok* (父職役): Father's taxable status.
26. *Bumyeong* (父名): Father's name.
27. *Mojigyeok* (母職役): Mother's taxable status.
28. *Momyeong* (母名): Mother's name.
29. *Sosaeng* (所生): Order of birth of servants' offspring.
30. *Jojigyeok* (祖職役): Paternal grandfather's taxable status.
31. *Jomyeong* (祖名): Paternal grandfather's name.
32. *Jeungjo jigyeok* (曾祖職役): Paternal great-grandfather's taxable status.
33. *Jeungjomyeong* (曾祖名): Paternal great-grandfather's name.
34. *Oejo jigyeok* (外祖職役): Maternal grandfather's taxable status.
35. *Oejomyeong* (外祖名): Maternal grandfather's name.

- 36. *Oebon* (外本): Family origin of the maternal side.
- 37. *Bigo* (備考): Remarks and errors.

The fields were divided into so many categories so that the contents of the *hojeokdaejang* can go through various statistical analyses while entering the original context as close to reality as possible. Researchers may actually sort the data and generate statistical results based on individual needs such as *myeon* (a township), *li* (district), taxable status, or family relations. For example, the fields can be sorted according to each individual's relationship to the family head, last name, and family origin to find out the number of families with a specific last name in a certain area, followed by sequential sorting according to the family



Picture 1. A page from the *Danseong hojeokdaejang* on CD-ROM



Picture 2. Statistical analysis of data from the *Danseong hojeokdaejang*

head with a specific last name. The fields are again reprocessed using a pivot table to sort the data on family head in the year registered in the *hojeok*, village, and each individual's relationship to the family head to get the result on the number of family heads with a specific last name.<sup>5</sup> Picture 2 below is a registry made this way; it shows the number of Andong “Kwon” families in Sindeungmyeon, Danseong prefecture.

Above is one simple example that shows the endless possibilities of statistical data analysis that can be performed with digitalized *hojeok*. Existing *Danseong hojeokdaejang* contains 250,000 records, i.e., 250,000 people, from 1606 to 1888. Each record is once again divided into thirty-seven fields, thus making the entirety of information contained within the *hojeokdaejang* enormous.

Studies on the *hojeokdaejang* began a new era, thanks to easy access and statistical data management. The *Danseong hojeokdaejang* on CD-ROM makes it possible for researchers to easily obtain a diverse range of data, which was previously attainable only through many hours of complicated processes. It also allows the research to overcome limitations of studying partial areas, social classes, and/or just the family heads in the *hojeokdaejang*. The Team is continuously searching for new possibilities by announcing new research results found through the digitalized *Danseong hojeokdaejang*. This paper attempts to introduce some of the research results and examine possible research directions in the development of the *hojeok*.<sup>6</sup>

## Organization and Structure of the Household

Accurate criticism of historical records is easily overlooked in spite of its importance, which can sometimes be attributed to the lack of clear process or intention in creating documents. This sometimes becomes a research topic in itself. That is also true of the *hojeokdaejang*. Although researchers knew that all of the family members may not have been entered in the *hojeok* during the Joseon period,

5. Since there is only one head per family, the number of family heads is equivalent to the number of families.

6. The article published by the Team was published in various academic journals, and it was also published as a book entitled *Research on the Danseong hojeokdaejang*. Articles introduced hereinafter are quoted from this book rather than individual articles published in academic journals.

they did not make an issue of it for a long time. Rather, researchers who have been overwhelmed by the magnitude of the *hojeok* were more concerned with searching for an easier way to utilize it.

That's why early studies on the *hojeok* were limited to statistically analyzing the taxable status of the names of family heads for the most part. Researchers who had to go through painstaking manual work just accepted the contents of the *hojeok* at face value. Moreover, such results were used to explain social status, changes in family members, and family relations. The *hojeok* was widely used to prove societal changes in late Joseon period during this process, but the *hojeok* was not analyzed in detail.

The first issue that the researchers of electronic *hojeok* raised was how accurately the *hojeok* reflected the social changes of late Joseon. They considered it necessary to examine the materials prior to discussing social changes. This also involves the task of revealing the process of making an entry in the *hojeok* as well as the characteristics of the household, which made the examination of *hojeok* a part of overcoming conventional research methods and began a new research on *hojeok*.

First, the conventional process of entering information into the *hojeokdaejang* in the late Joseon period was firmly revealed. The creation of an entry in the *hojeokdaejang*, which fundamentally began with the presentation of the individual household registration report, becomes complete after going through the processes of intermediate draft of household register and various completed volumes. But the individual household registration report presented by the head of the family sometimes did not include all of the family members, or there were changes in the taxable status or age. In the stage of intermediate drafting of household register created for each *myeon* and *li* based on the individual household registration report, an artificial adjustment were made of the total number of households in the *hojeokdaejang* and the total number of households in the *hojeokdaejang* allocated to each county and prefecture (Kwon Nae-hyun 2003).

The *hojeok* is not a material that mentions individual houses as is. It went through many variations on the national, district, and regional level as well as on the family level before consensus on the final version was reached. The accuracy of the population listed in the *hojeok* cannot be confirmed today. One thing that can be sure is that there were some households which existed in reality but not entered in the *hojeok*. This does not mean that the *hojeok* was made in complete disorder or only the families that are accountable are listed.

For example, one household in the *hojeok* can be divided into continuous

households, suddenly discontinued households, and newly emerging households. But in comparison to the *hojeok* of three years ago, a discontinued household is denoted differently in the “*doisang*” (都已上), which is the aggregate of the end of the content and the main body of the Census Register. The end denotes what is called “*jeolhojil*” (絶戶秩), i.e., the household that has been discontinued forever due to running away, immigration, or death. However, there were households that are under “*jeogeocho*” or “*nuho*” status, which means that these households were not in the main body of the Census Register but can be revived whenever necessary.

New households listed in the *hojeok* make this clear. New households created by branching out or migration appear, but new households that have nothing to do with these reasons continuously emerge. This implies that groups that could become new households existed without being entered in the *hojeok* but were added or deleted based on regulation or necessity at some points in time (Jeong Hae-eun 2003). The fact that applicable counties and prefectures kept separate track of the permanently deleted households and their existence tells of some principle or custom that artificially controlled the creation of the *hojeok*.

Discontinued families in the Census Register can be verified by comparing them with different documents. When the village codes and the *hojeok* of the Danseong region from the eighteenth century are compared, the result shows that approximately 10% of the *yangban* (aristocrats) and 30% of the upper commoners were not included in the *hojeok*. As expected, the exclusion rate of the common class was higher (Jeong Jin-yeong 2003a). As can be inferred from this as well, many households that were not entered in the *hojeok* existed.

Then, which households are entered in the *hojeok* in what way? This is the core issue and the most difficult issue to deal with in revealing the characteristics of the *hojeok*. The first thing to be verified is whether the households in the *hojeok* are naturally or artificially created. Research of *hojeok* up to now assumed that the naturally existing members in the most part formed one household. On the other hand, there were some issues raised early on as to the possibility of some members of one household being artificially included in other households or on two or more natural households gathering to form one household.

This is an issue that is still in debate, but the Team agrees with the view on artificial creation because there are many instances in the *hojeok* that cannot be explained by natural household. Some examples are the fact that slaves who physically lived apart from their owners were included in the owners' household

or that the gender ratio of the male population in the *hojeok* of Danseong in the eighteenth century was abnormally small (Jeong Jin-yeong 2003a).

If the households in the *hojeok* which is updated every three years were artificially created, the necessity of the nation must have been reflected. The Team explains this in relation to the collection of taxes from households or people. This can be confirmed by examining the determination of the total number of households in the *hojeokdaejang* and the total number of households in the *hojeokdaejang* at the level of counties and prefectures; as well, the total number in the “doisang” did not match the main body of the *hojeok*, but instead, the main body was adjusted to reflect the numbers in “doisang.” This is why the claim that the characteristics of the *hojeokdaejang* must first be studied before accepting the record at face value was presented.

How was a household artificially arranged, then? Many possibilities have been suggested by the Team without arriving at any one conclusion. But there seems to have been some rules in artificially arranging the *hojeok*. The family head must be married first in order to form a household, because the law considers the family head, his family, and dependents as minimum requirements for a household. As well, people who met certain financial criteria must have formed a household, because the *hojeok* also functioned as the registry for tax collection. The required number of heads for tax collection could not all be filled in this way, however, and thus, the social status and the taxable status of each individual were also taken into consideration when forming a household.

Therefore, one opinion on organizing the *hojeok* is that each *eup* (village) and the smaller *myeon* first classified the entire households based on the status of the family head and economic power calculated to fill the allotted number of taxable individuals. The next step was to examine whether the taxable individuals met the criteria for forming a household; those households that did not include taxable individuals were selected to meet the total number of households in the *hojeokdaejang*. Then their families and dependents were allocated to meet certain criteria in the number of mouths. All these steps must be processed before a household can be registered in the *hojeok* (Kim Kuen-tae 2003b).

Another opinion is that the natural mouths are organized first to satisfy the structural requirements of a household in order to create a lawful household, which is then divided and organized secondarily by being divided based on the total number of households allocated in the *hojeokdaejang* and the total number of actual households in the *hojeokdaejang*. Some households among those that were secondarily organized (composed of various lawful households) were reg-



istered as one household in the *hojeok* (Jeong Jin-yeong 2003b).

As the product of agonizing over various ways to reveal the process of how the *hojeok* was created, such opinions fueled heated debate in the academic world. Of course, there is a need to increase persuasiveness of each claim through more in-depth analysis of the creation process of the *hojeok*. And there is always the possibility of introducing new opinions that are totally different. But the most important point is that there is a definite necessity for our academia to seriously think about the creation process of a household. If the hypothesis on the creation of a household is denied, a logical explanation must be given on why some households were included in the *hojeok* while other households were excluded, as previously stated.

On the other hand, even if the hypothesis on creation of households is accepted, it is impossible to examine and reveal the relative importance of the cases where one natural mouth becomes one household, several natural mouths form one household, or one natural mouth forms two or more households. This is because households in the *hojeok* only show the organized result based on the number of households allotted by the government. It seems as if the households that were not organized did not completely escape from paying tax. The local authorities were clearly aware of the existence of the *jeokoeho* (households not registered in the *hojeok*), and the fact that they were made to support the *weonho* (households registered in the *hojeok*) in various ways can be confirmed (Kim Kuen-tae 2003a). There is also the possibility of *jeokoeho* forming a new household when *hojeok* is next created.

## Social Status and Taxable Status

There is not enough understanding about the characteristics of the *hojeok* in existing research in term of *hojeokdaejang* being created with the primary purpose of collecting tax. An index of social status of individuals or groups exists in the *hojeok*. Taxable status assigned to individuals by the government cannot operate without relation to social status. But consideration must be given to the fact that social status is not equated with taxable status, nor can direct correlation be made between the two due to the existence of many independent variables. Taxable status was allocated based on necessities of tax collection but was related to social status as well. Thus, not only social status and taxable status but a fundamental element of tax collection must also be taken into consideration at

the same time in order to correctly understand *hojeok*. Discussions on status can result in overly simplified, one-dimensional interpretation or distortion of historical facts if these three aspects are not taken into consideration simultaneously.

The Team focused on comparing the “*doisang*” at the end of the *hojeok* with the main body of *hojeok* to see if the content in the “*doisang*” that shows the number allocated by the government corresponds to the content of the main body that specifies individual households. Upon verification, it was found that, depending on the times, many differences exist between the main body and the “*doisang*” (Son Byeong-gyu 2003a). The total number in the main body of the *hojeok* corresponds to the record in “*doisang*” in the case of male taxable status from the late seventeenth century to the early eighteenth century, but there is a difference in the number of private servants and commoners of the female gender. There began to appear differences on most levels of taxable status except military service in the middle of the eighteenth century, and large discrepancies on all levels of taxable status appeared in the late eighteenth century. This phenomenon reversed itself in the early nineteenth century, but big differences showed up again after the mid-nineteenth century. From the limited perspective of military service, entries on military service in the main body of the *hojeok* decreased as of the late eighteenth century and showed a marked decline in the mid-nineteenth century (Son Byeong-gyu 2003b).

The period of putting utmost importance was on fulfilling the required number assigned by the government corresponds to the increase in overall discrepancy between the main body and the “*doisang*” in the *hojeok*. In other words, importance was put on filling the allocated number rather than whether the main body of the *hojeok* and the number necessary to the government corresponded. Thus, the role of the main body of the *hojeok* was reduced to that of understanding tax collection and especially military service based on taxable status. Such a discrepancy between the main body and the “*doisang*” in the *hojeok* weakened the correlation between taxable status and social status, which made it difficult to infer changes in social status based on changes in taxable status in the main body of the *hojeok*.

This can be verified through a new approach on Confucian scholars who did not hold official government posts. Confucians of the seventeenth-century to the first half of eighteenth century in the *hojeok* were of the *yangban* ruling class for the most part. But after the second half of the eighteenth century, taxable status of Confucian scholars who did not hold government posts began to appear in villages or lineages where none or almost none existed before. This phenome-

non increased as time passed, and dramatic increase in Confucian scholars who did not hold government posts can be seen in the middle of the nineteenth century (Sim Jae-woo 2003a).

Increase in Confucian scholars who did not hold government posts was probably due to various causes. But when the total number of military service and Confucian scholars who did not hold government posts in Danseong from the eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries were compared, it can be seen that the number of the latter group continuously increased even when the total number of the former group remained the same. This signifies that the increase in the number of taxable status of Confucian scholars who did not hold government posts was not achieved through decrease in military service. Then, increase in Confucian scholars who did not hold government posts can be inferred to have originated from increased taxable status of Confucian scholars who did not hold government posts among the taxable status of non-military service (Song Yang-seop 2003).

The number of Confucian scholars who did not hold government posts rapidly increased in the middle to late nineteenth century due to the utilization of the taxable status of Confucian scholars who did not hold government posts among common villagers who were far removed from the traditional Confucian class. The number of Confucians exploded in the middle and late nineteenth century due to the use of taxable status of Confucian among common villagers. It would be difficult to interpret this explosion as the result of exemption from taxable status through upward mobility of status of commoners or alias, because not all were considered *yangban* nor treated as such just because the number of Confucian scholars increased.

And the inconsistency between the main body of the *hojeok* and the “*doisang*” also existed in the case of Confucian scholars. In general, the numerical value of “*doisang*” provides more meaningful data in terms of tax collection in the nineteenth century which contained great discrepancies on both sides. The record on taxable status in the main body of the *hojeok* is losing its meaning. Communal payment on the level of *myeon-li* increased as the state allocated the number of taxable status per each region. Thus, it is important to reveal the formation process of the main body of the *hojeok* in this period during which the discrepancy with “*doisang*” appeared. This will provide a clue in understanding issues on social and taxable status from the viewpoint of changes in tax collection.

## New Research

The focus of the Team was mainly on examining the characteristics of *hojeok* itself. This is because existing research on the *hojeok* contains limitations in which social structure or changes in status are explained without analyzing *hojeok*. Thus, this new research on the *hojeok* defines households in the *hojeok* as created households and focuses on the formation process of households and mouths. The basic premise of the Teams is that the products of formations such as the number of households and mouths are directly connected to tax collection, which is then realized through the taxable status assigned to the individuals.

This claim is not made from abstract reasoning but through proof. It may, however, be difficult for researchers who think of the records in the *hojeokdaejang* as a natural reflection of existing households to accept this new claim easily. Research results from this perspective are many and influenced the academia for quite a long time, but serious criticisms and mutual debates must be undergone now that new research results have continuously been presented on the *hojeokdaejang* and the entire *hojeok* of a region has been digitalized, albeit limited to one region. Illogical criticism based on superficial understanding will only limit productivity in the academia as a whole.

That is not to say that the result of the Team is entirely correct. Logical support of this new claim must occur in a continuous manner from a new perspective. Many problems have accumulated in the formation process of a household, of households entered or not entered in the *hojeok*, number of households and distribution of taxable status, etc. Such problems should be resolved first by examining the characteristics of the *hojeok* but ultimately also to explain one aspect of the structure of Joseon society based on tax collection.

Another point to be taken in to consideration in the study of *hojeok* is the way to utilize *hojeok*. Examining the different phases of social lifestyle of the times is just as important as the act of analyzing the *hojeok* itself. The premise, of course, is that correct understanding of the *hojeok* will not result in errors. Research must be conducted after the characteristics and limitations of the *hojeok* are clearly understood.

Various studies are ongoing with *hojeok*, one of which is the examination of *myeon-li* organizations. The names and numbers of *myeon* and *li* that changed depending on the times were clearly entered in the Danseong *hojeok*. When these have been analyzed, important elements in the organization of *myeon* and *li* in the late seventeenth century were whether noble families resided there or

not and the range of their power of influence. Division and organization of *li*, on the other hand, continued to occur in relation to tax collection in the eighteenth century (Bak Hyeon-sun 2003). *Hojeok* shows one aspect of the process of natural villages becoming organized or divided into administrative *myeon* and *li*.

Explaining the existence of a special class entered in the *hojeok* can become an interesting subject of study. One example is that research on the exiled of the Joseon period was conducted partially through legal materials or diaries, but the *hojeok* shows the lives of the exiled convicts in more detail. Records of the exiled due to political rebellion or other criminal activities are scattered throughout the Danseong *hojeok*. Various types of the exiled existed such as those who lived with their families and private servants, those who married into the influential *yangban* families of the region, and those who fell to the lowest depths by becoming servants of the local government. Such analysis of the convicts in their places of exile shows how the *hojeok* can be utilized in diverse research.

*Hojeok*, on the one hand, can contribute to increasing the scope of understanding of regional society and general history of the late Joseon period when used along with ancient documents scattered throughout the regions (Kim Junhyeong 2003). Not only was the *hojeokdaejang* of the Danseong region digitalized, but many ancient documents are still left there, which will result in continuous research results from there. One of the new attempts in research is the attempt to link the *hojeok* with *jokbo*. Diverse information can be attained on people if the *hojeok* and *jokbo* are compared and traced. For example, *jokbo* is recorded with focus on blood relations, but *hojeok* will be able to supplement information on area of residence, enabling research on consanguineous villages.

Tracing the people who were entered in a specific family in the *hojeok* and analyzing their village of residence show that famous consanguineous villages were formed centered around the lineage of the legitimate son of the family. On the other hand, the lineage of illegitimate sons left consanguineous villages and formed their own villages. Moreover, even if descended from the same family, the lineage of legitimate and the lineage of illegitimate sons were mixed among groups who had relatively weak power or those who were on the periphery in comparison to the central consanguineous village residents. This clearly shows the existence of preferential treatment of legitimate children in the formation process of consanguineous villages. Preferential treatment does not stop here. Those who were of the same family name and blood relations to the residents of consanguineous villages but not verifiable could be found in common villages some distance away (Kwon Nae-hyun 2004).

Comparison studies on the *hojeok* and *jokbo* will provide a new energy into this field when taken into consideration the fact that research on consanguineous villages could not reveal specific modes of existence due to lack of materials. Comparative examination of the *hojeok* and *jokbo* can be applied to the field of population history. The *hojeok* and *jokbo* are both incomplete materials for understanding the demographic phenomenon, but the range of demographic estimates can be enlarged by finding what is lacking in one data from the other data (Son Byeong-gyu 2004).

Unfortunately, however, *hojeok* does not reveal the demographic phenomenon as is. The demographic structure of the households in the *hojeok* shows up in various forms, depending on the times. Entry of phenomena that could not have occurred if the population was entered as was shows that the census policy of the Joseon dynasty varied, depending on the times. In other words, the contents of the *hojeokdaejang* were greatly influenced by the census policy and the strength of comprehension about the households above and beyond the natural population increase.

The gender ratio was in equilibrium in the seventeenth century but the ratio of females was extremely high in the eighteenth century according to the population change table of the Danseong *hojeok*. Age distribution is even more unnatural in that it varied depending on the period or region, and different types were shown between males and females even in the same time period (Kim Kuen-tae 2003c). This is the result of actively comprehending specific classes based on gender and age in different times and entering the information accordingly in the *hojeok*.

Therefore, many independent variables must be taken into consideration in order to understand demography with *hojeok*. It was difficult for the academic field of population history to develop in spite of the existence of such vast material called the *hojeokdaejang* due to this limitation. This is the reason for population studies to have developed from Europe where detailed parish records on the lives of individuals such as births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths exist instead of government-instigated census on a national scale. It is imperative to develop a method to compensate for the limitations of the *hojeok* in its not reflecting the natural phenomenon of the population. One way would be to supplement this lack with *jokbo* as mentioned above. Moreover, there is a need to look into possible research spheres, because all information on population history cannot be found in the *hojeok*. In this context, attention is drawn to the recent research that reveals the age of first marriages and the custom of re-marriage in this region

through the usage of the Danseong *hojeok* (Kim Kuen-tae 2004).

As examined above, the *hojeok* can be utilized in many different ways, and its digitalization has provided even more possibilities. The realm of research is not lessened just because the existence of households was not truly reflected in the *hojeok*. Rather, inquiry into the background and process as to why the *hojeok* had evolved in this way has become more important. The task of unveiling the characteristics of the *hojeok* is one way of examining the characteristics of the Joseon society. As well, it is important to increase the breadth of understanding about the different phases of social life and to pioneer new research fields. Many possibilities are open. It is hoped that many researchers will participate in this process and hold discussions on various issues.

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