

Representing the Republic of Korea in Europe: The *sarangbang* Displays in Copenhagen and London

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***Mise en exposition* as a knowledge communication device**

Displays depicting traditional Korean houses or room interiors are a frequent occurrence in museums possessing Korean art and culture exhibits. Among other parts of the Korean house, this article will focus on one particular form of such installations by treating two *sarangbang* 사랑방, 舍廊房 (“male scholars’ study” is the most common English translation) displays. The first is in the Korean ethnographic collection of the National Museum of Denmark, built in 1966; the other is in the Korea gallery at the British Museum, constructed in 2000. Co-initiated by and built with the support of the government of the Republic of Korea (South Korea), these *sarangbang* were constructed by a national artisan renowned for the preservation and repair of traditional Korean houses, Shin Young-hoon 신영훈 (1935–). For the installations, he built a real house in what is called the traditional Korean style, *han-ok* 한옥, 韓屋, which has a tiled roof, wooden pillars, papered windows with wooden muntins, and a stone foundation. Within this architectural setting, interior rooms were built around Korean artifacts, such as an elaborate mattress, paintings and calligraphies, a folding screen, a writing desk, a stationery chest, lamps, the four treasures of the study (paper, ink stick, ink stone, and brush), a ceramic pencil case, and other objects.

These two traditional Korean houses, staged with Korean objects from the Chosŏn period, are not particularly unfamiliar items in terms of museum exhibition. The use of architectural elements as museum objects for displaying regional cultural traditions has a long history dating back to the 1900 Paris Exposition, where houses were exhibited inside and outside of pavilions or decorated with architectural motifs. In the early twentieth century, some European and American art museums installed period rooms, which provided a historical and architectural context for

displaying the museum's collection.¹ This function has been extended by transporting or building a whole house within the exhibition halls of museums, mainly in archaeological, ethnological, and encyclopedic museums with the theme of a country's culture. With its imposing dimensions and meticulous detail, the exterior and interior of a house implanted within a museum exhibition play a role in creating atmosphere or contextualizing works of art or artifacts from a particular period. As a communication device, it is charged with mediating relevant historical knowledge via a three-dimensional visualization.

In fact, our two cases of *sarangbang* installed in European museums were provided by Korea as objects imbued with Korean people's own traditional cultural references. These houses were created *in situ* by a contemporary master artisan, albeit in traditional style, with the placement of furniture and props suggested by museum curators. Therefore, they are neither transpositions nor exact copies of any particular historical building from Korea that might show the past as it was; rather, they are each an assemblage of certain techniques, ideas, and knowledge related to present-day scholarship on Korean art and culture.² An examination of the communication dynamics of these *sarangbang*, employed to deliver knowledge about Korean art and culture to European visitors, may help in unpacking how museum displays attempt to construct and communicate a holistic knowledge of one society to another.³

The museum exhibition is a crucial site for popularizing the knowledge that is simultaneously produced and appropriated by the natural and social sciences, and the humanities. In terms of its communicational scope, the museum exhibition shares the attributes of media insofar as it not only shows something, but also informs ways of seeing. In short, the exhibition is a semiotic event capable of producing both meaning and

1 To learn more about the national pavilions at international expositions, see Edward N. Kaufman, "The Architectural Museum from World's Fair to Restoration Village," *Assemblage* 9 (June 1989): 21–39. For the period room, see Neil Harris, "Period Rooms and the American Art Museum," *Winterthur Portfolio* 46, no. 2/3 (Summer/Autumn 2012): 117–138.

2 Assemblage here refers to a Deleuzian concept, *agencement*: "What is an assemblage? It is a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them, across ages, sexes and reigns – different natures." See Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Thompson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 69.

3 In this paper, following James Clifford, the terms "art" and "culture" are employed to encompass two major classificatory categories that were imposed on objects of non-Western origin collected by and translocated to Western museum. See James Clifford, "On Collecting Art and Culture," in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 215–251.

framework.⁴ The *mise en exposition* can be treated as a communication device for constructing and diffusing scientific knowledge about the social meaning of artifacts and their affiliated culture—not only about where an object was made and used, but also where it is collected and exhibited.⁵

Furthermore, by adopting a semiotic perspective similar to that of Luisa Passerini, who treats history as a communicative process and conceives history dually, as both the events that took place in the past and the cognition of what occurred, *post-factum*,⁶ the museum exhibition can also be associated with practices of writing historiography. This idea brings to the fore the literary structure of historiography and the literary dimension of the social experience.⁷ Again, the objects exhibited in a museum are not only represented in the world they were made for, but also the world in which they have been semiotized.

Taking this as our baseline, our consideration of the *sarangbang* displays in European museums begins with the original meaning of *sarangbang*, as part of living space, on the Korean Peninsula from the late fourteenth to the late nineteenth century, then extends to current perspectives on the *sarangbang* and its position in the Republic of Korea. The observation and analysis of the materialized knowledge with different signs present in the *sarangbang* reconstructions and the mode of meaning construction manifest in the museum context may also be considered in light of the

4 In the Expo Média movement (1982–1987) in France, an approach to the exhibition as a specific medium was developed, with the exhibition as a device producing meaning for the public. This approach was defined according to the four dimensions featuring a medium: 1) the institution that produces an exhibition, 2) how it is produced and constructed, 3) to whom it is addressed, and 4) the type of effects it may have on the audience. For more details, see Jean Davallon and Émilie Flon, “Le média exposition,” *Culture et musées*, Hors-série (2013): 19–45.

5 The expression, “scientific knowledge” is usually linked to the natural sciences. The development of scientific methods from the seventeenth century onwards contributed to our acquiring a certain knowledge relating to the physical world and its phenomena. At the same time, this method functions as a criterion determining the results of studying certain disciplines as scientific knowledge. To be scientific, a method of investigation must be based on observable and measurable evidence, subject to the specific principles of reasoning and experimentation. A scientific approach consists of collecting data through observation and experimentation, then by formulating and testing hypotheses. This scientific approach, first applied to the natural sciences, conceives nature as an object of study, with physics and chemistry. After the introduction of the positivist tendency, the other disciplines, or soft sciences, such as history, literature, sociology, which take humanity and society as their object of study, have incorporated these criteria in order to validate the relevance of their results. See Lydia Patton, “Methodology of the Sciences,” in *The Oxford Handbook of German Philosophy in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Michael N. Forster and Kristin Gjesdal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 594–606.

6 Luisa Passerini, “History and Semiotics,” *Historein* 1 (1999): 13.

7 Keith Moxey, “Semiotics and the Social History of Art,” *New Literary History* 22, no. 4 (Autumn 1991): 985–999.

relation between museum and visitor, who co-construct signification *in situ*.⁸ In terms of knowledge communication, the display needs to be viewed as an experience by visitors. When it comes to analyzing the display itself, there are, as enumerated by Stephanie Moser, not only the physical elements of the display to take into account, but also the other details of the surroundings in which the object is presented, such as architecture, location, layout, color, and so on. All of these “really matter when it comes to creating a system of meaning relating to the subject being represented.”⁹ Through a detailed examination of the display, I seek to use the example of *sarangbang* in European museums to demonstrate how their display produces a body of knowledge related to Korea while negotiating different cultural values and existing hierarchies, such as those between European and extra-European societies, as well as between works of fine art and ethnographic artifacts.

The *sarangbang* and its ascent to cultural heritage

It is necessary to first introduce the *sarangbang* in its original context of the Chosŏn era, a period that lasted roughly from the late fourteenth to the early twentieth century. The *sarangbang*, conventionally called the “scholar’s study” in English, is actually a multifunctional room in the men’s quarters of an upper-class (*yangban* 양반, 兩班) house. This is the place where the head of the upper-class family, who directed not only his family, but also played an important role in traditional Korean society, spent much of his time. It can be therefore perceived as a symbol of the order and discriminatory authorities of this period: a very strict hierarchy between men and women, free and slave men, old and young.

Legally, the Chosŏn’s social class system had only two categories of people, the *yang’in* 양인, 良人 (commoners) and the *chŏn’in* 천인, 賤人 (base persons). However, people were socially divided into four different classes: *yangban* 양반, 兩班 (scholarly officials), who constituted the superior and dominant class; the *chung’in* 중인, 中人 (junior officials), who represented the middle class; the *yang’in* 양인, 良人 (peasants, tradesmen and workmen), who made up the common people; finally, *chŏn’in* 천인, 賤人 (serfs, butchers, acrobats, shamans, etc.), who were considered outcasts. As *yangban* status was determined not only by lineage, an aspiring *yangban* needed to justify his status according to several specific criteria.

8 For this analysis, I mainly observed the current displays and published written sources of the *sarangbang* installation that can be accessed by visitors. I also interviewed several people who have engaged in the projects to gain an understanding of the situation. I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who generously accepted my request to give an interview.

9 Stephanie Moser, “The Devil is in the Detail: Museum Displays and the Creation of Knowledge,” *Museum Anthropology* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 22–32.

For example,

1. At least one of his ancestors had to have been invited to a competition of high officials or be a renowned scholar, and his genealogy had to clearly establish this filiation.
2. From generation to generation, the lineage had to have resided in the same village.
3. The lifestyle of yangban included obligations such as: practicing ancestor worship and hospitality, and following and preserving an academic and moral training.
4. He had to marry a wife who was part of a family that also met the three prior requirements.¹⁰

This space was generally used as a study, living room, bedroom, and guest room, but also served as a place where all the personal and social activities of a male head of household took place.¹¹ This was made possible by its flexible architectural features. Its doors and windows could be opened or closed to modify the space as required by the occasion or the vicissitudes of climate. The traditional heating system under the floor, *ondol*, meant that daily activities took place sitting on the floor and necessarily influenced the layout; likewise, the size of the space and the furniture remained quite modest. Its interior style was also influenced by the neo-Confucian ideal advocating honor and sobriety in everything.¹²

In the early twentieth century, as Chosŏn society was swept by a wave of “modernization” (or “Westernization”), the space and culture of the *sarangbang* gradually disappeared. In South Korea today, there exist only about fifty upper-class houses from the Chosŏn period.¹³

10 Miyajima Hiroshi 미야자마 히로시, 宮嶋博史, *Miyajima Hiroshi ūi yangban: uri ka mollattŏn yangban ūi silch'e rŭl ch'ajaso* 미야자마 히로시의 양반: 우리 가 몰랐던 양반 의 실체 를 찾아서 [Miyajima Hiroshi's yangban: In search of yangban we didn't know about] (Seoul: Nŏmŏbooks, 2014), 32–33.

11 For a discussion of further spatial and social features of *sarangbang*, see Yun Ir-I 윤일이, *Han'guk ūi sarangch'ae: Chosŏn sidae sangnyu chut'aek sarangch'ae ūi kongganjŏk t'ŭksŏng e kwanhan yŏn'gu* 한국의 사랑채: 조선시대 상류주택 사랑채의 공간적 특성에 관한 연구 [Sarangch'ae of Korea: Research for spatial characteristics of Sarangch'ae, upper-class house of Chosŏn period] (Busan: Sanjini, 2010), 12–39.

12 For the history of the upper-class house during the period of rule by the Chosŏn dynasty, see Choe Sang-hŏn 최상현, *Chosŏn sangnyu chut'aek ūi naebu konggan kwa kagu* 조선 상류 주택의 내부 공간과 가구 [The Interior and furniture of the upper-class house in the period of Chosŏn], (Seoul: Ihwa Yŏja Taehakkyo Ch'ulp'anbu, 2006).

13 Choe Sang-hŏn, *Chosŏn sangnyu chut'aek ūi naebu konggan kwa kagu*, 25.

However, the space and the culture of the *sarangbang* returned to Korean society in another form. In the 1960s and 1970s, with the emergence of state-led policy on cultural properties, the culture of the Chosŏn era was assigned the status of Korea's perpetual traditional culture.¹⁴ The life of *yangban*, who had lost their high status and the attendant respect following modernization in the twentieth century, came to symbolize Korean society. Their lifestyle is now considered to be *the* Korean tradition, and most Koreans imagine their ancestors as *yangban* class, even though a third of the Chosŏn period population during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries was composed of *nobi* 노비, 奴婢 (slaves).¹⁵ It was near the end of the twentieth century, when Confucian tradition seemed to wane in everyday life, that many families attempted to secure a symbolic title as *yangban*. In Korea, the abolition of castes in 1894 meant that all Koreans could become *yangban*. Therefore, during the Chosŏn period and even into the twentieth century, certain people tried to become *yangban*. The number of *yangban* increased constantly through the end of the Chosŏn period. Until the abolition of social discrimination took place in 1894, the *yangban* class, which accounted for about seven percent of the population at the end of the seventeenth century, increased to such an extent that it constituted about half of the total population in the late nineteenth century. The number of recognized *yangban* families is still growing today.¹⁶ Thus, the particular history of the class of *yangban* and their lifestyle in the period of Chosŏn became the general history of all Koreans. For present-day Koreans, *yangban* are regarded as the symbolic ancestors of every Korean today, representing the core values of Korean society and conveying a somewhat imaginary vision of Korea to the world in the name of Korean tradition. As the socio-economic development of South Korea and the East Asia area more broadly has been attributed since the 1980s to its Confucian culture, the ruling ideology of *yangban*, Confucianism, once rejected by Korean society in criticism of the regime that led to

14 For this tradition-making in the Republic of Korea, see Im Hyung-taek 임형택 et al., *Chŏnt'ong: kŭndae ka mandŭrŏnaen to hana ūi kwŏllyŏk* 전통: 근대가 만들어낸 또 하나의 권력 [Tradition: another power made by modern] (Seoul: Inmul kwa Sasangsa, 2010).

15 Due to scant surviving historical records of population during the Chosŏn period, the exact number of *Nobi* is not known. Generally, scholars estimated *pro tanto*. See James B. Palais, *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: Yu Hyŏngwŏn and the Late Chosŏn Dynasty* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 208–270.

16 For further information on the history of becoming *yangban*, see Chung Jae-Young 정재영, “20 segi huban yangban ūi sŏngkyŏk pyŏnhwa wa jaesil ūi kŏllip 20세기 후반 양반의 성격 변화와 제실의 건립 [Changes in the nature of *yangban* and the establishment of ancestral shrines in the late twentieth century: focused on the case of Suya-ri Village of Cheongdo County in Gyeongbuk Province].” *Jibangsa wa jibangmunhwa* 지방사와 지방문화 [Journal of local history and culture] 17, no. 1 (2014): 103–137.

Japan's annexation of Korea, has solidified its position as the bulwark of Korea's intangible cultural heritage. The Confucian tradition in South Korea also distinguishes the country from its neighboring rivals such as North Korea (DPRK) and the People's Republic of China (PRC), whose communist regimes have denounced Confucianism as a feudal order, or Japan, which has directed foreign attention to its Buddhist culture.

Because of its incorporation into South Korean national identity, Confucianism is considered worthy of study, preservation, reintegration in the present, and transmission to future generations. As an ideology, Confucianism has neither form nor substance, and requires manifestations in one or more objects that recall the past and visibly convey its key message to people today. Among other traditional artifacts or architectures, the *sarangbang*, the portion of the upper-class house from the Chosŏn period where the male head resided, has been selected and re-materialized to facilitate the conservation, restoration, and transmission of traditional Korean culture. Furthermore, its interior decor is intended to realistically reproduce the room used by a *sŏnbi* 선비 (Confucian scholar), potentially adding further meanings to this *mise en exposition*. The *sarangbang* display makes sense as a medium that evokes national and ethnic feelings and a concrete representation of an "imagined community."¹⁷

Museums devoted to Korean culture, which have appeared both in and outside the country since the 1960s, often stage a *sarangbang*, similar to those in our two cases.¹⁸ The *sarangbang* reconstruction enables the individual objects of the past to evoke a place, giving the impression that this room was brought in its entirety from a single moment in time. From a semiotic perspective, the *sarangbang* in a museum display may be considered as a sign that designates an object and is designated for interpretation by a visitor. Taking Peirce's typologies of sign as icon, index, and symbol, the different objects and interpretations of the *sarangbang* in a museum may be surmised.¹⁹ Firstly, as an icon, the *sarangbang* is an architectural reproduction of part of a traditional Korean house. In the exhibition space, it provides a spectacular contextual scene in relation to

17 See Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 1991). For the Korean case, see Shin Gi-Wook 신기욱, *Han'guk minjokchui'i ūi kyebo wa chŏngch'i* 한국 민족주의의 계보와 정치 [Ethnic nationalism in Korea: Genealogy] (P'aju: Ch'angbi, 2009).

18 The numerous museums that have had or have *sarangbang* displays cannot be all listed in this paper. Some examples would be the National Museum of Korea and National Folk Museum in Seoul, both in South Korea, The British Museum in London, The National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC, and the recently opened National Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw.

19 Charles S. Peirce, "Logic as Semiotics," *Philosophical Writings of Peirce* ed. Justus Buchler (New York: Dover Publications, 1955), 98–119.

the exhibited artifacts surrounding the visitor. Also, construction processes and rigorous conformism are considered essential. We cannot make an icon for an unknown object, because it must illustrate cognitive arrangements. The icon includes a reproduction action.²⁰ Secondly, considering the *sarangbang* as index, the exterior and interior of this Korean house are meant to indicate the past material and intellectual lives of *sōnbi* in Chosŏn Korea. The *sarangbang* is portrayed as a scientific object, related to ethnographic and art historical fact, as it suggests a causal link between past lives and its material traces. Thirdly, as a symbol according to convention, the *sarangbang* refers to traditional Korean culture.²¹

The semiosis of this medium—the exhibition of the *sarangbang*—will be captured by understanding the denotation of a sign, the received meaning, and the way of communication. The *sarangbang* is placed in a museum in order that its signifier, as part of a traditional Korean house, conveys a signified related to the culture of Korea. However, its construction of meaning in the museum gallery may be altered if we take into account the “Model Visitor”²²: its signification also varies according to who visits this gallery; that is to say, the meaning-making dynamics may shift depending on the communication situation the *sarangbang* occupies.²²

Paek’aksanbang, the *sarangbang* in the National Museum of Denmark

In 1966, the Korean government sent Shin Young-hoon, the national artisan for traditional house preservation and repair, to Copenhagen with thirteen tons of wood to build a Korean house inside the National Museum of Denmark.²³ A *sarangbang*, modeled after the one located in the Yeongyeongdang Complex 연경당, 演慶堂 in the Secret Garden (*biwon* 비원, 秘院) of Changdeokgung Palace 창덕궁, 昌德宮, was designed by Yi Gwang-gyu 이광규 (1918–1985), a master of traditional wooden architecture.

20 Umberto Eco, *Le signe : histoire et analyse d’un concept*, trans. Jean-Marie Klinkenberg (Bruxelles: Labor, 1988), 91.

21 This semiotic perspective of *sarangbang* display is further discussed in Park Ji Young, “Musée national d’art coréen, un dispositif de transmission de valeurs et de connaissances des arts coréens : analyse muséologique de la mise en exposition de Sarangbang aux musées nationaux en République de Corée” (PhD diss., Université d’Avignon et des pays de Vaucluse, Université du Québec à Montréal, Ecole du Louvre, 2017), <https://archipel.uqam.ca/11674>.

22 This expression “Model Visitor” is borrowed from Umberto Eco’s “Model Reader.” See Umberto Eco, “Introduction: The Role of the Reader,” in *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 7–11. The “Model Visitor” is a model of the potential visitor presupposed by exhibition producers.

23 “Han’gukkwan Kaekwan 한국관 개관 [Korea Gallery reopening],” *JoongAng Ilbo* 중앙일보 (October 13, 1966): 7.

With his blueprints in hand, Shin spent an entire month building the house by himself in the exhibition gallery of the National Museum of Denmark. The Korean government presented the Korean house in the museum as part of a UNESCO project, “Relocating East and West” (1957–1966).²⁴ As Denmark had taken part in the Korean War (1950–1953) by sending a hospital ship, the *Jutlandia*, to Busan in 1951 as a member of the United Nations, this project was planned as a diplomatic exchange.²⁵ According to Shin’s recollections, there were very few Korean things on display, and his traditional Korean costume, which was prepared for the opening ceremony, still remains as an object on view to the public.²⁶ As the Korean government thought the *sarangbang* had been well received, two years later Yi and Shin were sent to Mexico City for eight months to set up a Korean pavilion in a park.²⁷

The “Korean house” is still on view in Gallery no. 270 of the National Museum of Denmark. It is a life-size replica measuring four meters in height and six meters in width. It is composed of two interconnected *kan* 칸 (a square space between pillars). An open room and parquet floor with balustrade are attached to one side of the gallery. The rectangular room has a tiled roof. One door and one window are open, while two other windows on the wall are closed. On the left part of the house, between the roof and the window, is a signboard that reads “Paek’aksanbang 백악산방” in Korean (Fig. 1).²⁸ There are two large stones under the balcony. The rooms are staged inside with furniture and props. The left part of this room is meant to be a study, with a bookcase and a reading desk. A mattress and pillows are arranged in a sitting position on the floor. There are also several sitting cushions set out for guests, while calligraphies hang on the wall. On the right side of the room, wooden furniture, lamps, books, ceramics,

24 Seo Wansu and Oh Wonsöp, “Segye e simnün ‘han’guk üi ìl’ 세계에 심는 한국의 얼 [Spirit of Korea in the world],” *Joong Ang Ilbo* 중앙일보 (January 14, 1967): 6.

25 Yi Chōng 이청, “Inmulyōngu’ Shin Young-hun Munhwajae jōnmunwiwon 申榮勳 문화재 전문위원 [‘Prospography’: Shin Young-hun, member of the Cultural Property Expert Committee],” *Wōlgan Chosōn* 월간조선 [Monthly Chosun], April 1999, accessed August 15, 2018, <http://monthly.chosun.com/Client/News/viw.asp?ctcd=&nNewsNumb=199904100027>.

26 Shin Young-hoon 신영훈, “Moksu üi hanōk iyagi: Moksu üi London tongshin 4 목수의 한옥이야기: 木壽의 런던통신 4 [Korean house story of a carpenter: Moksu’s correspondence from London 4],” Hanok Munhwawon 한옥문화원 [Hanok Cultural Center], July 19, 2000, accessed August 15, 2018, http://hanok.org/index.php?_filter=search&mid=carpenter&search_keyword=%EB%8D%B4%EB%A7%88%ED%81%AC&search_target=title_content&document_srl=13337.

27 Yi Chōng, “Inmulyōngu’ Shin Young-hun Munhwajae jōnmunwiwon.”

28 It can be translated literally as “Room of White big mountain.” Paek’aksan also refers Pukhansan 북한산 in Seoul.

and a charcoal brazier are displayed (Fig. 2). It is difficult to say which part of the day this scene is meant to show. Because of the guardrail in front of the house, it is not easy to take in the interior of the room. The details of the exhibited objects are obtained by using the gallery's multimedia panel. This panel provides information on the name, image, production date, and provenance of each object. Most of these objects were donated at around the same time as the building was erected, while others, such as the ceramics and some wooden furniture, are from the museum's original Korean collection, mostly from Dr. Kaj Kalbak's donation of 1963. As the object labels in this room exist only in digital form, visitors are unable to find a readily available explanation of this house for themselves within the exhibition space. There is no provision of information about the building that might help explain the meaning of this space. The date of construction, the identity of those who constructed it, the historical period from which the house originates, or who might have lived in the house all go unmentioned. However, the museum website provides some information on the house (although only in Danish), noting that "the most spectacular 'object' in the Korean collection is a copy of a traditional *sarangbang* or the learned man's study."²⁹

As mentioned above, the meaning of the displayed object is conveyed by the object itself or via digital labels. The nature of the museum in which it is installed and the sequence of neighboring exhibition galleries, as well as the objects displayed around it co-construct its meaning. The *sarangbang* is in the ethnographic treasure gallery of the National Museum of Denmark. The museum covers Danish history, including its colonies, classical, and Near Eastern archaeology. In each area, there are many stacks of typical ethnographic artifacts collected by European and American collectors in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, such as clothing, transport items, tools, pottery, and relics from all over the world: North, South, and Central America, Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Arctic. Rearranged in 1998, the Korea Gallery is located between a gallery with East Asian ceramics, which is next to the Japan Gallery, and the China Gallery. This reflects Korea's geopolitical position in East Asia. The gallery was designed to be entered after passing through the two big galleries that display elements of the cultures of Korea's neighbors. About three hundred objects are exhibited in the Korea Gallery. A large showcase to the side of the house displays traditional costumes and accessories from the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as artifacts related to Shamanism. In the two wall racks on the right side of the house are Buddhist relics and bronzes, craftworks

29 Original: "Den mest spektakulære 'genstand' i den koreanske samling er en kopi af en traditionel *sarangbang* eller den lærde mands studerekammer." Nationalmuseet i København, "Asien / Korea," accessed January 20, 2019, <https://natmus.dk/historisk-viden/verden/asien/korea/>.



Fig. 1: View of the front of the “Korean house,” life-size sarangbang replica in Gallery no. 270 of the National Museum of Denmark (author’s copyright).



Fig. 2: View of the internal area of the sarangbang replica in Gallery no. 270 of the National Museum of Denmark (author’s copyright).

from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, as well as various artifacts such as masks, fans, embroideries, and writing tools from the Chosŏn period. On the left wall, there is a traditional wedding robe for a bride and a portrait of a male scholar. A cabinet in the middle exhibits a Korean folk painting from the late nineteenth century. Most of these objects were collected and donated by Danes who stayed in Korea in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with further material donated by the South Korean government when the Korea Gallery opened in 1966.



Fig. 3: Corner of sarangbang replica in the British Museum. Note structural details and the position of the two information boards (author's copyright).

Han'yŏngdang, the *sarangbang* in the British Museum

In 2000, Shin Young-hoon was involved in the building of his second Korean house exhibit in Europe, this time at the British Museum. With the support of the Korea Foundation as part of their sponsorship of Korean galleries in foreign museums, a new Korean gallery with about 250 objects opened in part of the area previously occupied by the British Library.³⁰ The Korea

³⁰ A mission that seeks to promote a better understanding of Korea in the international community and increase friendship and goodwill between Korea and the rest of world through a variety of exchange programs. It is noteworthy that a fund from the government is sensitive to Korean public opinion.

Foundation spent around 150,000 euro on the construction of the *sarangbang* in this new gallery.³¹ The materials for the house—earth, roofing, stone, and wood—were prepared and prebuilt in Korea, then packed and shipped to England in two containers. Shin and twelve other Korean artisans, including Son Deok-gyun 손덕균, a specialist in traditional wood furniture, designed and built the *sarangbang* in the British Museum in fifteen days.³² No'andang 노안당, 老安堂, the Pavilion of Prince Hŭngson 흥선대원군, 興宣大院君 built in 1864 in Unhyŏngung Palace 운현궁, 雲峴宮, was the model;³³ however, as it was to be built inside a museum building, weight was a considerable issue, and the pavilion was not fully reconstructed, with several modifications made in relation to scale. The use of architectural elements was not new to the museum's Korean art exhibitions, but it was the first time they had built a "close to full-scale replica" of a traditional Korean house in a gallery.³⁴

Located in Room 67 for Korea, this *sarangbang* is slightly bigger than the Denmark installation. Two rooms with floors finished with laminated paper lacquered with bean oil and a room with a wooden parquet floor make up a house with three *kan*, comprising an area of approximately 26.4 square meters in total (Fig. 3). Following the grammar of traditional Korean house building, each visible wooden pillar on the tiled stylobate stands on square foundation stones. A signboard in the center of the area under the roof is painted with *Han'yŏngdang* 韓英堂 in Sinitic characters (Fig. 4).³⁵ Two thirds of the wooden ceiling is covered with paper. As the building is attached to a corner of the

31 "Taeŏng Pangmulgwan Han'kuksil 11wŏl kaegwan 대영박물관 한국실 11월 개관 [Korea gallery in British Museum reopens in November]," *JoongAng Ilbo* 중앙일보 (July 6, 2000): 11.

32 Shin Young-hoon, "Moksu ūi hanŏk iyagi: Moksu ūi London tongshin 1 목수의 한옥이야기: 木壽의 런던통신 1 [Korean house story of a carpenter: Moksu's correspondence from London 1]," Hanok Munhwawon 한옥문화원 [Hanok Cultural Center], July 19, 2000, accessed August 15, 2018, http://hanok.org/index.php?_filter=search&mid=carpenter&search_keyword=%EB%8D%B4%EB%A7%88%ED%81%AC&search_target=title_content&document_srl=13334.

33 Hwang Hyŏntak 황현탁, "Close up. Yŏngguk Pangmulgwan e mun yŏn sangsŏl Han'kuksil 클로즈 업. 영국박물관 에 문연 상설 한국실 [Close up. Permanent Korea Gallery open in British Museum]," *Kukchŏngsinmun* 국정신문, November 20, 2000, accessed August 18, 2018, http://www.korea.kr/archive/governmentView.do;JSESSIONID_KOREA=JhN9S8jhJQY2xXJwTjpkMpRSScp-Wh55gss312sc65mFfd1JNYyvr!6182595981832012722?newsId=148746933.

There is a discrepancy in the information given on the model of this *sarangbang*. According to the Korean government, it was modeled after the No'andang in Unhyŏngung Palace built in mid-1800s, and according to the British Museum, its model is the *sarangbang* of the Yeongyengdang in the Changdeokkung Palace.

34 Sascha Prieue, "Atmosphere and Surroundings: The Use of Architecture in Korean Exhibitions and Galleries at the British Museum," in *Arts of Korea: Histories, Challenges, and Perspectives*, ed. Jason Steuber and Allysa B. Peyton (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2018), 40–65.

35 Han'yŏngdang can be translated as "the Korea-UK house."

gallery, one door and three windows made of wood and paper are all open to the gallery. A wooden door and two other paper windows on the wall remain closed.

Like the exterior, the interior of the *sarangbang* (Fig. 5) represents the traditional Korean way of life, in particular the scholarly life of men in the Chosŏn period. The National Museum of Korea and Chung Yangmo 정양모, its director at the time, initiated the arrangement and furnishing of the interior with new objects produced specifically for this room. The wooden furniture maker Son Deok-gyun made fourteen pieces of wooden furniture, while Wooil-yo 우일요, a Korean white porcelain production company, provided twenty pieces of Korean ceramics for the *sarangbang*.³⁶ All the furniture and props are in two rooms with papered walls and floors. The scene is set for someone reading a book. In front of a mattress, a book lies open on the reading desk with other stationery items close by. Sitting cushions for guests are kept on one side. Other daily necessities such as a tea set, a lamp, and a letter rack are also displayed. An ink painting decorates one wall.

An understanding of the building and its furnishings is shaped by two text panels with images located on the two open sides of the house. The first panel, on the long side of the building, has two sections. Along with a drawing of a mid-nineteenth century house complex, the first section, titled “A gentleman’s room,”³⁷ provides information on houses in the Chosŏn period in general and on *sarangbang* in particular. The second text, “Furnishing the *sarangbang*,” explains the ways in which Confucianism, as practiced in the late Chosŏn period, influenced the style of home furnishing and names the nine objects on view from the position of the information panel. These are listed with index numbers on a photograph.³⁸ The other text-image panel is installed on the short side of the building and it also has two sections. The first section, “Furnishing the *sarangbang*,” repeats the identification of “simplicity and clarity” as features of *sarangbang* furniture and explains the use of paper in

36 Priewe, “Atmosphere and Surroundings,” 56.

37 Transcription of panel text “A gentleman’s room”: Houses in the Joseon period (1392–1910) had different areas reserved for men and women, reflecting Confucian principles. This room, known as *sarangbang*, and its adjacent floor area were a central part of the outer quarter of a house complex. In this multi-functional space, a man studied, greeted guests, dined, and slept. The furniture and utensils adorning the room showcased his taste, knowledge, and wealth.

38 Transcription of panel text “Furnishing the *sarangbang*” (1): Many aspects of everyday life were guided by Confucian principles, including the style of home furnishings. Furniture in the *sarangbang*, a male space, featured simplicity and clarity. Furniture in female spaces was elaborately decorated, using metal, lacquer and patterned wood.



Fig. 4: Visitors observing the sarangbang replica and displays of portable material culture in Room 67 for Korea, at the British Museum. Note the signboard at the center of the area below the roof. “Kyōngjinchu Yōchogōsa 庚辰秋 如初居士 [autumn 2000 Yōchogōsa (pen name of Kim ūng-hyōn)]” (author’s copyright).



Fig. 5: Interior of the sarangbang replica in the British Museum (author’s copyright).

traditional house architecture.³⁹ This text is also accompanied by a list of the names of the objects in the *sarangbang* visible from the position of the panel. The second section, “The British Museum’s *sarangbang*,” is dedicated to the *sarangbang* in the British Museum: its architect, date, model, and style, with credit lines and a photograph of the construction scene.⁴⁰ This panel indicates only the names of the objects on display inside the house, whereas detailed information is provided on the building. From the perspective of museum object label-writing conventions, the British Museum gives the *sarangbang* building and its furnishings the status of a museum object on view, but the props and pieces of furniture are treated as secondary.

Founded in 1753, the British Museum is one of the largest museums in the world and is considered to be the world’s first public national museum to open.⁴¹ The collections and permanent exhibitions of this encyclopedic and universal museum are part of a vast temporal and geographical project. It has permanent exhibitions about the Americas, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece and Rome, Asia, the Near East, and Europe. The level on which the Korea Gallery is located has two exhibition rooms. One is dedicated to Korea, the other to Chinese ceramics. The lower-level gallery that is linked to the Korea Gallery is China and South Asia; thus, the Korea Gallery is surrounded by displays of Chinese objects.

The Korea Foundation Gallery in the British Museum, created in 2000 by the Korea Foundation’s donation, was refurbished at the end of 2014 with a grant of the National Museum of Korea, but the *sarangbang* continues to be exhibited as before. The wider Korean exhibition is composed of various Korean objects, from sixth-century pottery to contemporary artworks, and its sub-topics cover diverse areas such as Korean history, a history of the Museum’s Korean collection, Korean women’s culture, etc. Around the *sarangbang*, objects from the Chosŏn period are on display: a model Korean house made in the 1900s, coinage, women’s clothing and accessories and fans. Furthermore, the traditional Korean-style latticework

39 Transcription of panel text “Furnishing the *sarangbang*” (2): Furniture in the *sarangbang*, a male space, featured simplicity and clarity. Furniture in female spaces was elaborately decorated. Korean paper (*hanji*) is applied as a finishing material to a great range of surfaces in such a building: windows, doors, walls, ceiling, and floors. The paper was used to improve the lighting of the rooms and provide some privacy and protection from the elements.

40 Transcription of panel text “The British Museum’s *sarangbang*”: This *sarangbang* reconstruction was built by the renowned Korean architect Shin Young-hoon and twelve Korean craftsmen in July 2000. This building is in the style of an upper-class house of the mid-1800s. Its design is based on the *sarangbang* of the Yeongyeongdang (House of Flowing Happiness) in the Changdeokgung Palace in Seoul.

41 See Jeffrey Abt, “The Origins of the Public Museum,” in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 115–134.

that covers the windows nearest the gallery emphasize the focus on Chosŏn culture in this section of the gallery.

A traditional Korean house built in European museums

In the Copenhagen and London cases, the contemporary reproduction of the traditional Korean house is employed to contextualize objects on display or to provide a cultural example of Korean traditions for museum visitors. The house's component parts are nearly the same in both cases. Modeled on upper-class, or *yangban*, men's quarters, the exterior of each house represents a *sarangbang*. Each house is furnished with different articles associated with the daily life of a man of the Chosŏn period, and the space is staged at the moment of using the *sarangbang* as a space for study. Each *sarangbang*, with its traditional Korean architecture and focus on the lifestyle of a Korean classical scholar, is technically, intellectually, and financially supported by the South Korean government with the intention of transmitting to Europeans a knowledge of Korea's unique cultural identity.

However, from a communication perspective, these two *sarangbang* seem to create different meanings in addition to offering a way of seeing this aspect of traditional Korean culture. Of course, there is an approximately forty-year gap between the *sarangbang* in Copenhagen and the London version. The growing scope of financial and academic support from the Republic of Korea has also impelled changes in how the same objects and culture are presented. The later *sarangbang* had the advantage of being built according to more accurate historical research and it imposes a more aesthetic perspective on the space and culture; for example, the quality of the props displayed together and their disposition with the proper ratio were meticulously assessed. Yet the differing signification of each *sarangbang* project comes not only from the installation itself, but also reflects the different communication situations the two exhibitions occupy. Even though both are European universal museums dealing with "world cultures," the composition of the Korean collections in the two museums is very different, and their curatorial approaches also seem dissimilar. This difference reflects, to a certain point, tradition and the current position of a Eurocentric universal knowledge production system about the cultures of the world, which usually refers to non-European cultures.⁴²

From the *sarangbang* in the two museums, several conflicting points emerge in shaping this *mise en exposition* of Korean art and culture in European society. This does not mean that there has been a polarity

42 For further discussion of museums of world cultures today, see Barbara Plankensteiner ed., *The Art of Being a World Culture Museum: Futures and Lifeways of Ethnographic Museums in Contemporary Europe* (Bielefeld: Kerver, 2019).

between European curators and institutions and Korean specialists and the government in displaying Korean culture in the museum. Rather, the *mise en exposition* of *sarangbang* is a result of long-term collaboration between the two sides and in the traditions of exhibiting Korean art.⁴³ The dissonance arises from the communication situation involved in creating shared value between different places and times in a museum space.

Dealing with the encounters around the installation of a *sarangbang* in a museum in representing Korean culture to Europe in relation to these two cases seems sometimes to subvert and sometimes to reinforce the global hierarchies of values associated with non-European and traditional arts. Firstly, disciplinary frameworks marked by rigid boundaries between ethnology and art history are imposed on practice, interpretation, and classification, and bring about a slippage in the full message that a staged *sarangbang* is expected to deliver. The South Korean government chose an upper-class *sarangbang* architecture modeled after royal palace architecture, and emphasized the associated scholarly ethos as a symbol of quintessentially Korean aesthetic and moral culture, in the National Museum of Denmark. However, the “house filled with Korea’s mood” is subsumed under nineteenth-century European ethnographic disciplinary norms such as collecting samples of daily life, eccentric curios rather than examples reflecting the aesthetic sense of native people, and is interpreted as an ethnographic example of Korean architecture and culture.

In the British Museum, the Korean architectural reference was placed in a folk-art section in the earliest proposal for the new gallery in 1991. However, in the final version of the contract for the construction of the *sarangbang* in the British Museum, it is specified that it should conform to “the nature of that installed in the National Museum of Korea.”⁴⁴ The *sarangbang* display in the National Museum of Korea at that time was created by Chung Yang-mo for a temporary exhibition entitled “Chosŏn Sidae Munbang Chegu 조선 시대 문방 제구 [Stationeries in the Chosŏn period]” in 1992. The exterior of the building was not built in its entirety, but the interior is meticulously composed in order “to capture the minds and tastes of gentlemen and help to understand the spirit of traditional arts and crafts.”⁴⁵ This way of displaying the *sarangbang* interior is still on view in the permanent exhibition gallery for calligraphy and painting (the former

43 For the history of Korean art, and its exhibition history outside of Korea, see Steuber and Peyton eds., *Arts of Korea*.

44 Priewe, “Atmosphere and Surroundings,” 52.

45 Kungnip Chungang Pangmulgwan 국립중앙박물관 [National Museum of Korea], *Chosŏn Sidae Munbang Chegu 조선시대문방제구* [Stationeries in the Chosŏn period] (Seoul: T’ongch’ŏn Munhwasa, 1992), 5.

Art Gallery), which are two genres of art valued as “high art” in East Asia.⁴⁶ This approach to the *sarangbang* interior added the Korean art historical view by showing the art world of people living in the Chosŏn period beyond everyday life.

Putting an architectural element in a museum as a cultural reference has a long tradition in Western European and North American art museums. This idea was explicitly adapted at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, whose former director, Fiske Kimball, inspired by European museums such as Skansen in Stockholm, Sweden, believed that architecture can synthetically illustrate a people’s art and culture.⁴⁷ During the 1920s, Kimball transported and exhibited architecture from all over the world, including a Japanese teahouse and a Qing scholar’s study, to display in his new museum. When the *sarangbang* in Copenhagen was built, it was received as “a specimen of the beauty of Asian architecture.”⁴⁸ However, it is rare for an Asian museum to place architectural heritage in an art-historical perspective. In the history of pre-modern East Asian art, architecture is, unlike in the Western conception of art history, not understood within and included in the notion of art.⁴⁹ Old houses are regarded not as artworks but as ethnographic artifacts and are collected and usually exhibited only in folk museums. The *sarangbang* is a reconstruction of an old house concept executed in modern craftsmanship, rather than consisting of historical material artifacts or transporting a whole house to a museum. The reconstructed *saranbang* is a pure architectural concept seeking to transmit knowledge of Chosŏn architectural history, while also attempting to act as a materialization of Korean intangible heritage—the transmitted, endangered, and preserved house building technique of Chosŏn period. In doing so, it dissociates this structure from folklore, customs, and social relations associated with the house as an object of daily life in Chosŏn Korea. The Korea Foundation also underlines this particular aspect of the *sarangbang* in the British Museum: “This room is installed inside the exhibition gallery, but it is different from the existing exhibition room in that it was built as a *han-ok* to be viewed in

46 Burglind Jungmann, “Identity and Aesthetics: Some Thoughts about the ‘Koreanness’ of Korean Art,” *Misulshak yŏn’gu* 美術史學研究 [Korean journal of art history] 300 (2018): 317.

47 Lauren Weiss Bricker, “The Writings of Fiske Kimball: A Synthesis of Architectural History and Practice,” *Studies in the History of Art* 35 (1990): 225.

48 Seo Wansu and Oh Wonsöp, “Segye e simnūn ‘han’guk ūi ōl’.”

49 Guo Hui, “Canonization in Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Art History,” *Journal of Art Historiography* 10 (June 2014): 2–6.

terms of architecture rather than as an Exhibition set [educational tool].”⁵⁰ The architecture displayed as museum object in a European museum is not a reproduction but a historical remnant. Jean Davallon remarked upon the communicational contract between exhibition producers and visitors “by habit”: “the authenticity” of a displayed object, “the veracity” of mobilized knowledge and “the definition” of the represented world. According to him, the *mise en exposition* is expected to be loyal to this procedure in representing itself to its visitors.⁵¹

As an object produced in the present by the museum, the *sarangbang* display engages fundamentally this contract of (European) museum communication. But its other nature is as a visual manifestation of Korean culture, intended from the Korean side to impose the authenticity of an object in order to indicate the existence of a specifically Korean world. This tug-of-war between two worlds with differences in cultural values but operating in a shared space brings about the ambiguous status of this “copy,” according to the National Museum of Denmark, or “reconstruction,” as per the British Museum, in the exhibitions. For in stabilizing its position for the clear delivery of the features of the object to the visitor, certain communicational strategies have been executed while others still need to be established. For example, the construction of the *sarangbang* was videotaped by the British Museum in order to produce a documentary about traditional Korean architecture and thus to add value to its authenticity as a museum object. However, as it was newly built by the museum as a vehicle for transmitting cultural historical knowledge, its scientific veracity is more strictly policed than other genuine historical objects in the exhibition. In delivering historical knowledge, the reproduction is at times preferred to the original: “a good copy is better than a deficient original.”⁵² The most fastidious reproduction must maintain a sincere relationship with the latest qualified history. However, the reproduction also must be restituted by reference to elements and narratives selected by the producer, which might leave the gap between the historical evidence and the reconstruction and inscribe fictive elements in the museum device. Likewise, as noted by David Jacobi when delving into the communication of the model and the restitution of

50 Original: “이 사랑방은 전시실 내부에 설치되었으나, 전시 세트가 아닌 건축 개념의 한옥으로 지었다는 점이 기존 전시실의 건축물과 다른 점이다.” See Korea Foundation 국제교류재단, “Taeyōng Pangmulgwan Han’gukuil sarangbang wangong 대영박물관 한국실 사랑방 완공 [Korean museum of *sarangbang* completed],” *KF Newsletter*, July 2000, accessed October 8, 2018, <http://newsletter.kf.or.kr/korean/contents.asp?vol=21&lang=Korean&no=213>.

51 Jean Davallon, *L’Exposition à l’œuvre : stratégies de communication et médiation symbolique* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1999), 31–33.

52 David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country – Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 455.

archaeological research in the museum, the reproduction can offer a historical experience as tangible and authentic as the original, but it is nevertheless another experience: the reconstruction, as synoptic tool,

[...] is not only to help the visitor to perceive but also to retain, to memorize the essential information. As in the process of schematization, the model can become an important cognitive contribution. In this case, everything that has been eliminated from the representation (the reduction of concreteness and analogy) reinforces and highlights the preserved and indeed remarkable details, as if they are highlighted for the intention of the viewers. Stylized and more abstract, what this model loses in resemblance is gained in comprehension. It guides and models the gaze of the visitors and, without saying so, imposes a deliberate point of view.⁵³

In the *sarangbang* cases, the two museums have taken an example of a house from the high society of the nineteenth century. Different synchronic and diachronic components of Korean culture disappear, leaving only the masculine culture of the ruling class. Also, staging the room as a study without mentioning its other functions limits information regarding the ways of living during the Chosŏn period. The scientific veracity of an object in a museum comes not only from an exact restitution of the past, but also from sincere mediation of the intended message to its visitors. This veracity is not only legitimated by well-conducted academic research, but also by well-performed communication. Having become identified as national heritage of Korea, the *sarangbang*, as it has so far been displayed in museums, represents a homogeneous Korean culture, at the risk of causing a misunderstanding of the relationship between the staging and the visitors' knowledge of the *sarangbang*. For example, the virtue of poverty reflected in the exhibition of the *sarangbang*, and which is mentioned in the panel text, does not refer to a poor life, but to idealized poverty and an aesthetic choice of this particular time and class. The Yeongyeondang, the model for these two *sarangbang*, was not a part of an upper-class house at all; rather, it was part of a complex royal

53 Daniel Jacobi, "La maquette entre reconstitution savante et récit imaginaire dans les expositions archéologiques," *La Lettre de l'OCIM* 123 (May–June 2009): 21. My translation. For more discussion about the point(s) of view imposed by museography, see Daniel Jacobi, "Les faces cachées du point de vue dans les discours d'exposition," *La Lettre de l'OCIM* 100 (July–August 2005): 44–53.

palace.⁵⁴ Moreover, the protagonist of this scene, the man of letters, is often a character endorsing a collective and abstract identity, who never existed and whose existence has not been established historically. If a *sarangbang* installed in a museum is not loyal to existing historical research data but derived from cultural clichés and fails to define accurately the world it represents, it will not be able to play its role in knowledge communication as desired by the producers of an exhibition.

Conclusion

The achievement of modernity through invented tradition,⁵⁵ the pursuit of a unique “Koreanness” and affirmation of Confucianism as a national ideology have all been widely imposed on Korean art museography as well as historiography. From the early nineteenth-century beginning of the “Great Divergence” (to employ the words of Kenneth Pomeranz) between most Western European or North American countries and East Asian countries,⁵⁶ this historiography has been undertaken with a view to producing and diffusing knowledge of Korean art and culture in ways suited to Western or global standards. With the growing economic and political power of East Asian countries since the 1980s, museographic devices and Korean art-historical research paradigms developed in and for Korean museums increasingly mediate the way Korean art is presented in European and North American museums, where installations receive financial and scholarly support from the South Korean government.

The *mise en exposition* of the *sarangbang* was developed to communicate scientific knowledge in this context. However, in European museums, which are presumed to have stronger scientific communication rules due to their long traditions and also to be less likely to be invested in Korean identity

54 For a more current discussion of *Yeongyeongdang*, see Kim Tong-uk 김동욱, “Gojong 2 nyŏn ūi Yeongyeongdang suri e taehesŏ 고종 2년의 연경당 수리에 대해서 [A research on the reconstruction of Yeonkyeong-Dang in the second year of King Gojong’s Reign],” *Kŏnch’uk Yŏksa yŏn’gu* 건축역사연구 [Journal of architectural history] 13, no. 37 (2004): 53–69; Sa Jean Sill 사진실, “Yeongyeongdang jinjak konggan unyŏng gwa kŭkchangsaajŏk ūiŭi 연경당 진작(演慶堂進爵)의 공간 운영과 극장사적 의의 [The spatial management of Yungyungdang Jinjakand its significance in Korean theatre history],” *Han’guk kŭk yesul yŏn’gu* 한국극예술연구 [The journal of Korean drama and theatre] 27 (2008): 13–61, and Son Shin-young 손신영, “Yeongyeongdang Kŏnch’uk yŏndae yŏn’gu: saryo rŭl chungsim ūro 演慶堂 建築年代 研究 : 史料를 中心으로 [A study on the year of the construction of Yeongyeongdang],” *Misulshak yŏn’gu* 美術史學研究 [Korean journal of art history] 242–243 (2004): 121–157.

55 On this, see the papers in Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). For the Korean case, see Im Hyung-taek et al., eds., *Chŏnt’ong: kŭndae ka mandŭrŏnaen tto hana ūi kwŏllyŏk*.

56 Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

construction and national promotion as Korea might wish, the same communicational device is liable to produce uncontrolled meanings in the absence of supplementary explanation. This tends to bind Korean art and culture to an ethnic and exotic perspective rather than communicating its aesthetic merits, which can be a trap, if Korean art seeks to avoid this attitude on the global art scene. Notwithstanding, European museums have also changed their perspective on Korea exhibitions in recent years. As demonstrated by the attempts to find an epistemological place for the British Museum in their communication strategy on their *sarangbang*, the two worlds meeting in an exhibition space must each change their cultural values or accommodate the new global cultural context. Are these *sarangbang* in Copenhagen and in London authentic objects, that is to say, materialized intangible Korean cultural heritage? Or are they a copy of a traditional Korean house, respectively? Their meaning has been subject to incessant construction as we described and will continue to evolve as the global context changes.