

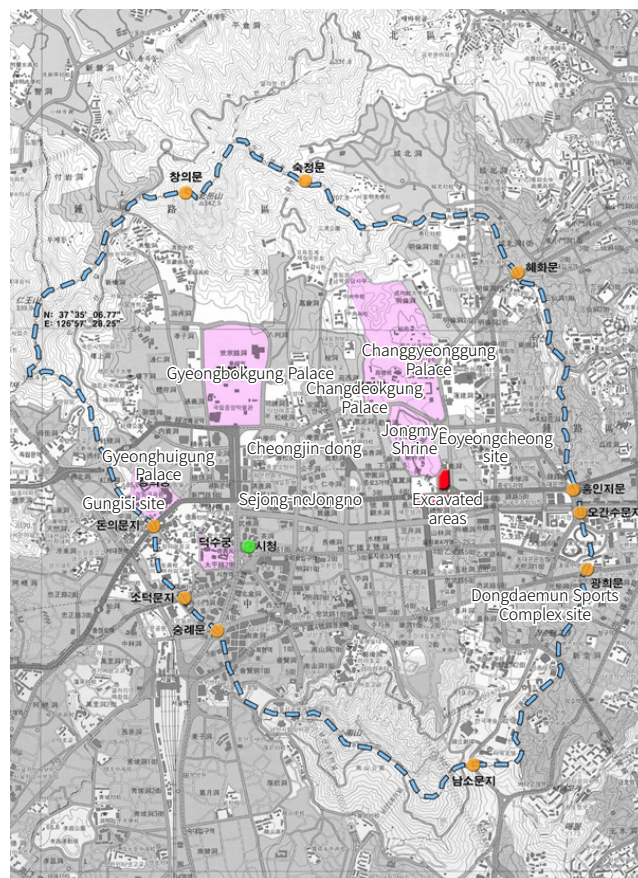
# Types of Sixteenth-century Joseon White Porcelain with Hangeul Inscriptions Related to the Royal Court and Their Significance

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## Introduction

Over the past few years, a large quantity of white porcelain vessels bearing either stippled or ink-written inscriptions in Hangeul (Korean native script) have been excavated from sites of government offices and palaces in the area situated within the city wall of Seoul, known as Hanyangdoseong (漢陽都城). These sites include the Eoyeongcheong (御營廳, Royal Guards Command), the Gungisi (軍器寺, Government Arsenal), and the royal palaces of Changdeokgung, Gyeonghuigung, and Gyeongbokgung, as well as other sites related to the royal court, such as Jongmyo royal shrine and the Hoeamsa Temple site (Map 1).

Hangeul inscriptions were generally added after the vessels had been manufactured and transported to their eventual place of use. The inscriptions can be largely divided into two categories according to the quality of the vessel and the method used to create the inscription. The first category includes stippled inscriptions made by engraving with a sharp pointed device near the foot of the vessel to indicate a name or place of use. The vessels bearing such inscriptions are generally pure white in color, with thin walls and a foot with a cross-section forming an



**Map 1.** Sites within Hanyangdoseong that yielded white porcelain with Hangeul inscriptions. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (Image edited by the author; HRICH 2011, Fig. 1)

inverted triangle. They are glazed on the base<sup>1</sup> and were fired on a bed of fine sand. It is notable that many of the stippled Hangeul inscriptions are accompanied by Chinese characters, such as 天 (*cheon*, heaven), 地 (*ji*, earth), 玄 (*hyeon*, black), 黃 (*hwang*, yellow), 左 (*jwa*, left), 右 (*u*, right), and 別 (*byeol*, divide), similar to those incised on early Joseon white porcelain produced at the government kilns. In the second category are ink inscriptions or marks left on the base of vessels of lesser quality. Some indicate a name or place of use, but in other cases it is unclear what they refer to. These vessels have a white color of lower purity, thick walls, and an unglazed bamboo-node-shaped foot, known as *jukjeolgup*. They were fired on clay or sand spurs and piled on top of each other in the kiln.

This article examines the Hangeul inscriptions found on white porcelain vessels in order to identify the different types of inscriptions related to the royal family. It aims to refine the understanding of their significance, as well as to reveal where the vessels were used, thereby correcting errors in existing research on related topics. Also, by examining the content of the inscriptions, their placement on the vessel, and any accompanying Chinese characters such as those listed above, the objective is to determine when and why stippled inscriptions came to be made on white porcelain used in the royal court and how these inscriptions changed over time.

## Significance and Place of Use of Vessels with Hangeul Inscriptions

### Use in the Private Living Quarters within the Palaces

The stippled Hangeul inscriptions on white porcelain often begin with the syllables *ut* (웃), *dae* (대), *keun* (큰), and *dong* (동), or end with the syllable *syo* (소) in combinations such as *utsyo* (웃소), *daesyo* (대소), *keunsyo* (큰소), and *dongsyo* (동소). The vessels bearing such inscriptions are of high quality and display the characteristics of white porcelain vessels used at the royal court that are incised with the Chinese characters 天, 地, 玄, and 黃. Previous research has presumed that white porcelain with stippled inscriptions was used somewhere inside the palace, but the specific locations for its use have not been identified. It is generally believed, however, that they were for use in the living quarters of the king and queen, concubines, princes, and (grand) queen dowager.

The inscriptions starting with *ut* (웃) are varied, including *utsyo* (웃소), *utgung* (웃궁), *utjyen* (웃젠), and *utjye* (웃제), and can

be found on a large number of vessels (Tables 1 and 2). In Table 1, *utjyen* is seen to be a combination of the Hangeul rendering of the Chinese characters 上 (*sang*) meaning “upper,” and 殿 (*jeon*), meaning “palace hall.” In the *Joseon wangjo sillok* (朝鮮王朝實錄, Annals of the Joseon dynasty), the word *sangjeon* (上殿) first appears in 1479 in reference to the king’s grandmother (Entry for the 20th day of the fifth month of the tenth year, *Seongjong sillok*, vol. 104). Later, the same word was applied to both the grand royal queen dowager, or *daewang daebi* (大王大妃, king’s grandmother) and the royal queen dowager, or *wang daebi* (王大妃, king’s mother). Similarly, *utgung*, *utjye*, and other inscriptions starting with *ut* are also related to a queen dowager. In this respect, it is recorded that in 1516, King Jungjong (中宗, r. 1506–1544) held a sumptuous banquet for the queen dowager and on the occasion sent one hundred sacks of rice to the *bongung* (本宮) at the queen dowager’s residence. The same record further explains that *bongung* means *sajang* (私藏), the place where the private assets of the queen dowager were kept (Entry for the tenth day of the first month of the eleventh year, *Jungjong sillok*, vol. 23). Therefore, it is presumed that *utgung* refers to this storehouse, also known as *bongung*, in the living quarters of the royal queen dowager or grand royal queen dowager. Another record from 1511 refers to *bongung* as *jajeon saje* (慈殿 私第), which means that the term *bongung* can also be applied to the maiden home, or *saje* (私第) of the queen dowager (Entry for the fourth day of the first month of the sixth year, *Jungjong sillok*, vol. 13). The word *utjye* also means the maiden home of the royal queen dowager and is, like *utgung*, presumed to indicate a place where private assets were kept. White porcelain vessels with stippled inscriptions of *utgung* or *utjye* are notably also marked with Chinese-character inscriptions such as 地, 黃, and 右, as commonly found on white porcelain used in the royal court during the sixteenth century (Figs. 1-2 and 1-3).

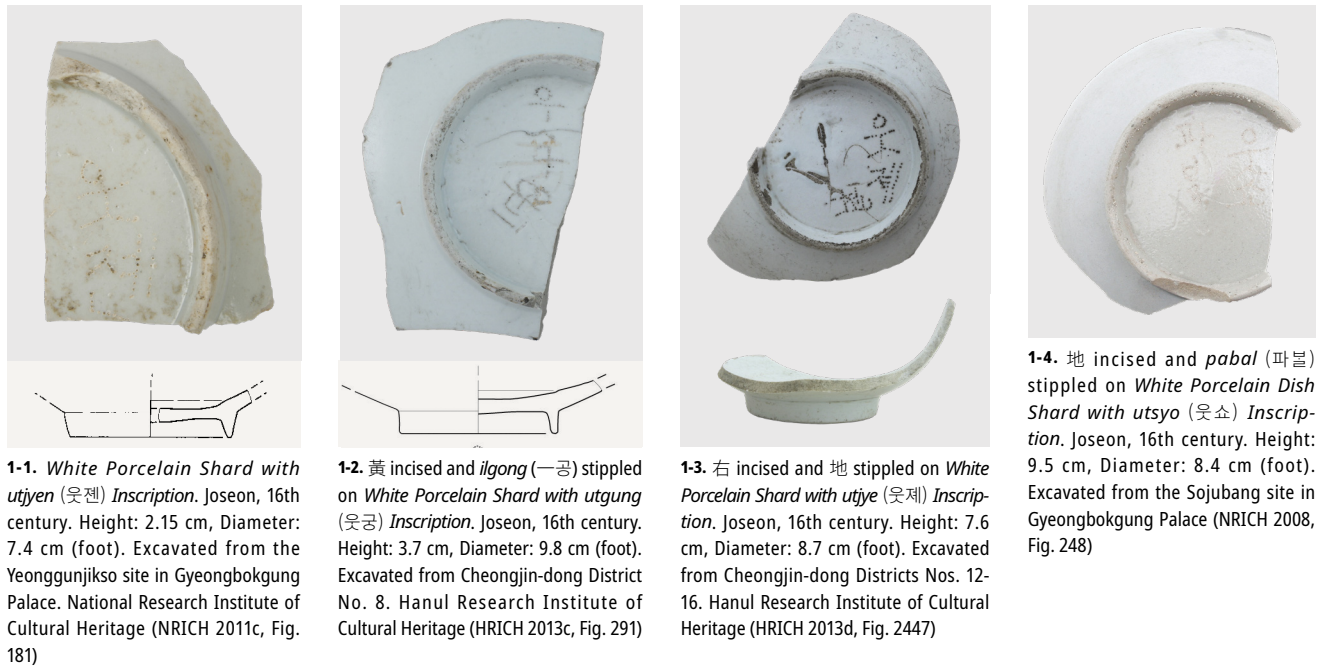
Vessels bearing the *utsyo* inscription can be divided into four groups according to the inscription content, location of the stippled inscription, shape of the foot, type of firing support, quality, and purity and chroma of white color. All of these are factors that differ according to period (Table 2). Existing research tends to interpret *syo* (소) as *so* (所), which means place (所), but the *syo* in these Hangeul inscriptions is actually *so* (燒) referring to the Sojubang (燒廚房), or royal kitchen. Therefore, *utsyo* is a contracted expression referring to the royal kitchen within the living quarters of the royal queen dowager or the grand royal queen dowager. In Table 2, Group I includes those vessels with a Chinese-character inscription, such as 地 and 左, as found on the white porcelain ware used in the royal palace during the sixteenth century. The cross-section of the foot takes the form of an inverted triangle, which is typical of

1 In this article, base refers to the underside of the bottom of a vessel, which is referred to as 굽안바닥 (*gubanbadak*) in Korean. As opposed to this exterior base, 내저면 (內底面, *naejeomyeon*) is translated as interior base.

	Inscription	Location of inscription	Accompanying Chinese-character Inscription(s)	Place of excavation	Period
1	<i>utgyen</i> (웃겐)	Base	None	Yeonggunjikso (營軍直所, regional soldier's quarters) site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	16th century
2	<i>utje</i> (웃제)	Base	地 (stippled) 右 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
3	<i>utgeung</i> (웃궁)	Base	None	Eoyeongcheong site	
4	<i>utgung</i> (웃궁)	Interior base	地 (incised) 黃 (stippled)	Gungsi site	
5	<i>utgung</i> (웃궁)	Base	None	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
6	<i>utgung</i> (웃궁), <i>ilgong</i> (一宮)	Base	黃 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8	
7	... <i>t gung</i> (... 스궁)	Base	黃 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 2 and 3	

**Table 1.** White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to *utgyen*, *utje*, or *utgung*

**Fig. 1.** White porcelain related to the queen dowager<sup>2</sup>



white porcelain manufactured at the government kilns during the first half of the Joseon dynasty. The foot and the wall of the base are also thin (Fig. 2-1). Vessels in Group II are characterized by a lesser degree of purity and chroma in white color and a foot with the outer edge leaning slightly inwards or shorter than previous examples and with a thicker wall, forming a trapezoid shape. Examples have been excavated from Cheongjin-dong, the Eoyeongcheong site, and the Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace (Fig. 2-2).

Vessels in Group III are those in which the inscription has developed from *utsyo* (웃쇼) to *utbatsyo* (웃밧쇼) or *udansyo* (웃안쇼), and with the location of the stippled inscription moved from the base to the body next to the foot. *Batsyo* (밧쇼) is an abbreviated Hangeul form of *batso* (밧소) or *batsojubang* (밧소주방)

방, 밧소주방), all of which indicate the outer royal kitchen, the Oesojubang (外燒廚房). *Ansyo* (안쇼) is a Hangeul abbreviation of *anso* (안소) or *ansojubang* (안소주방), which indicate the inner royal kitchen, the Naesojubang (內燒廚房). From the eighteenth century on, the kitchen for the royal queen dowager or the grand royal queen dowager was divided into outer and inner sections, which led to a change in the stippled Hangeul inscriptions on the white porcelain used there. The foot bears a U-shaped cross-section and becomes shorter than those seen in vessels from earlier times (Fig. 2-3). Vessels in Group IV have a sexagenary cyclical year name added to the main inscription, for example *jeongmi utdeonansyo* (정미웃던안쇼) or *muo utbat(syo)* (무오밧[쇼]). They were fired on coarse sand, rather than in saggars (Fig. 2-4). The addition of cyclical year names to the inscriptions on white porcelain ware used in the palace appeared in the latter half of the eighteenth century, as evidenced by a fragment of a dish bearing the inscription *gabo hyebingungsaeng* (갑오 헤빙궁성) excavated from the Eoyeongcheong site (Fig. 10-3). Hyebingung

<sup>2</sup> In cases of shards, the height means the maximum height of the remaining part and the diameter is an estimate. This applies to all heights and diameters of the shards mentioned in this text.

Group		Inscription	Location	Accompanying Chinese-character inscription(s)	Place of excavation	Period
I	1	<i>utsyo</i> (웃쇼) <i>pabal</i> (파불)	Base	地 (incised)	Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	16th century
	2	<i>utsyo</i> (웃쇼)	Base	左 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
	3	<i>utsyo</i> (웃쇼)	Base	None	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
II	4	<i>utsyo</i> (웃쇼)	Base	None	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	17th century
	5	<i>utsyo</i> (웃쇼)	Base	None	Eoyeongcheong site	
	6	<i>utsyoson</i> (웃쇼손)	Base	None	Sojubang site at Gyeongbokgung Palace	
III	7	<i>utbatsyo</i> (웃빳쇼)	Body, next to foot	None	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	18th century (first half)
	8	<i>utbatsyo</i> (웃빳쇼)	Body, next to foot	None	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
	9	<i>udansyo</i> (웃안쇼)	Body, next to foot	None	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8	
	10	<i>utijeonan(syo)</i> (웃전안[쇼])	Body, next to foot	None	Upper part of the stone wall at Hoedongcheon and Jesaengdongcheon Streams in front of Jongmyo	
IV	11	<i>dyeongyu ut...</i> (영유웃...)	Body, next to foot	None	Road in front of Oedaemun (main gate), Jongmyo	1777
	12	<i>muo utbat(syo)</i> (무오 웃빳[쇼])	Body, next to foot	None	Road in front of Jongmyo, west ditch	1798
	13	<i>jeongmi-utdyeonansyo</i> (정미 웃면안쇼)	Body, next to foot	None	Heungbokjeon site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	1787

**Table 2.** White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to *utsyo*

**Fig. 2.** White porcelain with *utsyo*-related inscriptions



**2-1. White Porcelain Shard with *utsyo*** (웃쇼) *Inscription.* Joseon, 16th century. Height: 2.5 cm, Diameter: 8.0 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013d, Fig. 837)



**2-2. White Porcelain Shard with *utsyo*** (웃쇼) *Inscription.* Joseon, 17th century. Height: 3.8 cm, Diameter: 8.4 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013d, Fig. 1972)



**2-3. White Porcelain Shard with *udansyo*** (웃안쇼) *Inscription.* Joseon, first half of the 18th century. Height: 2.4 cm, Diameter: 6.4 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 8. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013c, Fig. 271)



**2-4. White Porcelain Shard with *muo utbatsyo*** (무오 웃빳쇼) *Inscription.* Joseon, 1798. Excavated from the road in front of Jongmyo, west ditch. Seoul Museum of History

(惠嬪宮) is the title used from 1763 to 1780 for Royal Princess Consort Hyebin of the Hong clan (惠嬪 洪氏, 1735–1815), also known as Lady Hyegyeng (惠慶宮), mother of King Jeongjo (正祖, r. 1776–1800). This indicates that the year *gabo* here would correspond to 1774. Hyebinggung also refers to Yongdonggung Palace (龍洞宮), Lady Hyegyeng's residence, which was the private property of the royal family.

White porcelain vessels bearing the *daesyo* (대쇼) inscription began to appear around the time vessels incised with the Chinese characters 天, 地, 玄, and 黃 were produced (Table 3). *Daesyo* refers to the royal kitchen servicing the Daejeon (大殿), the king's

living quarters in a palace. The white porcelain bowl incised with 地 from Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12 through 16 also shows the stippled inscription *daesyo* on one side of the base (Fig. 3-1). The shards of two white porcelain vessels excavated from cultural layers III and IV in Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 2 and 3 are respectively incised with the Chinese characters 左 乙八十 (*jwa eupalsip*) and 別 甲戌 (*byeol gapsul*), and also carry the stippled inscription *daesyo* on the body near the foot (Fig. 3-2). Vessels with inscriptions on the base of cyclical year names or of cyclical year names in combination with numbers have been found at kiln sites dating to the seventeenth century onwards. Therefore,



	Inscription	Location	Accompanying Chinese-character inscription(s)	Place of excavation	Period
1	<i>daesyo</i> (대쇼)	Base	地 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	16th century
2	<i>daesyo</i> (대쇼)	Base	None	Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	
3	<i>daesyo</i> (대쇼)	Base	?	Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	
4	<i>daesyo</i> (대쇼)	Body, next to foot	別 甲戌 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 2 and 3	17th century
5	<i>daesyo</i> (대쇼)	Body, next to foot	左 乙八十 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 2 and 3	
6	<i>daesyo</i> (대쇼)	Interior base	None	Hamhwadang, Jipgyeongdang, and corridors in Gyeongbokgung Palace	16th century
7	<i>daesyo</i> (대쇼)	Interior base	None	Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	
8	<i>sindaesyo son</i> (신대쇼 손)	Base	None	Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	17th century (first half)
9		Base	左 (incised)	Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	
10	<i>sindaesyo</i> (신대쇼)	Base	別 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8	

**Table 3.** White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to *daesyo*

**Fig. 3.** White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to *daesyo*



**3-1.** 地 incised on *White Porcelain Shard with daesyo* (대쇼) *Inscription*. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 6.2 cm, Diameter: 7.3 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013d, Fig. 1779)



**3-2.** 別 甲戌 incised on *White Porcelain Shard with daesyo* (대쇼) *Inscription*. Joseon, 1634. Height: 2.6 cm, Diameter: 7.3 cm (foot). Excavated from the Sijeon site at Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 2 and 3 (HRICH 2013b, Fig. 396)



**3-3.** *White Porcelain Shard with daesyo* (대쇼) *Inscription*. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 3.7 cm, Diameter: 16.8 cm (mouth); 5.6 cm (foot). Excavated from the Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace. National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (NRICH 2008, Fig. 264)



**3-4.** 別 incised on *White Porcelain Shard with daesyo* (대쇼) *Inscription*. Joseon, first half of the 17th century. Height: 2.1 cm, Diameter: 7.3 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 8 (HRICH 2013c, Fig. 187)

it can be presumed that the inscription 別 甲戌 refers either to the year 1634 or 1694, but the shape of the foot and the fact it was fired on fine sand make the year 1634 more likely. The vessel bearing the inscription 左 乙八十 is also likely to have been produced in the first half of the seventeenth century rather than in the second half, considering the inverted triangular cross-section of the foot and the fact that it was fired on fine sand. Two other lower-quality white porcelain shards with the stippled *daesyo* inscription on the interior base, a bamboo-node-shaped foot, and traces of being fired on sand spurs have been found (Fig. 3-3). Such examples indicate that white porcelain vessels of varied quality were used in the royal kitchens.

One inscription related to *daesyo* is *sindaesyo* (신대쇼), which is believed to refer to the royal kitchen for the new (新, *sin*) Daejeon, or “new king’s quarters” (Fig. 3-4). If the older king’s quarters were in Gyeongbokgung Palace, the new quarters were likely to be found in a different place. The *Joseon wangjo sillok* and the *Gyechuk ilgi* (癸丑日記, Diary of the gyechuk year)

refer to Changdeokgung Palace, to which the king moved in 1611, as the “new palace” (Entry for the 19th day of the second month of the third year, *Gwanghaegunilgi*, vol. 38). Hence the “new king’s quarters” most likely describes his new living quarters in Cheongdeokgung Palace. White porcelain vessels bearing the incised Chinese characters 左 or 別 along with the inscription *sindaesyo* have been found in large quantities at kiln sites dating to the latter half of the sixteenth century, and it is presumed that *sindaesyo* began to be stippled on vessels soon after the king moved to Changdeokgung Palace in 1611.

White porcelain vessels with the inscription *keunsyo* (큰쇼) also began to appear in the sixteenth century when vessels incised with 天, 地, 玄, and 黃 were being produced. *Keunsyo* is a reference to the royal kitchen of the *keunjeon*, or “big palace hall,” which also refers to the Daejeon (the king’s quarters within a palace) (Table 4) (Figs. 4-1 and 4-2). Sixteenth-century white porcelain vessels were marked with the inscription *keunsyo*, or *daesyo* for the royal kitchen servicing the king’s quarters. In

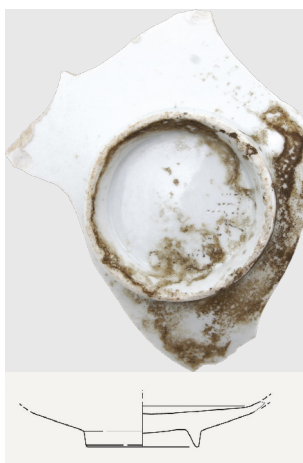
	Inscription	Location	Accompanying Chinese-character inscription(s)	Place of excavation	Period
1	<i>keun s</i> (큰쇠)	Base	天 (incised)	Cheongjiin-dong District No. 5	16th century
2	<i>keunso</i> (큰소)	Base	黃 (incised)	Hoeamsa Temple site	
3	<i>keunso</i> (큰소)	Base	None	Hoeamsa Temple site	
4	<i>keunso</i> (큰소)	Base	?	Hoeamsa Temple site	
5	<i>keunso</i> (큰소)	Base	?	Hoeamsa Temple site	
6	<i>keunso</i> (큰소)	Base	None	Hoeamsa Temple site	
7	<i>keunso</i> (큰소)	Base	None	<i>Sijeon haengnang</i> site before Jongmyo	
8	<i>keunso</i> (큰소)	Base	None	Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	
9	<i>keunbat(syo)</i> (큰밭[쇼])	Body, next to foot	None	Jongmyojeongyo Bridge, riverbed sedimentary layer	17th century
10	<i>gyemi keunbatsyo</i> (계미 큰밭쇼)	Body, next to foot	?	Gyeonghuigung Palace site	1763

**Table 4.** White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to *keunso*

**Fig. 4.** White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to *keunso*



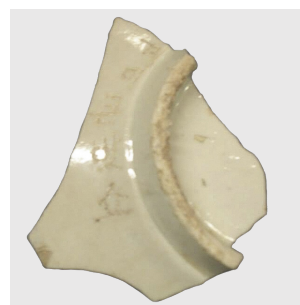
**4-1.** 黃 incised on White Porcelain Shard Bowl with *keunso* (큰소) Inscription. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 12.8 cm, Diameter: 20.8 cm (mouth); 9.3 cm (foot). Excavated from the Hoeamsa Temple site. Gyeonggi Cultural Heritage Research Institute (GCHRI 2013, Fig. 10617)



**4-2.** White Porcelain Shard with *keunso* (큰소) Inscription. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 3.2 cm, Diameter: 7.8 cm (foot). Excavated from Sojubang site, Gyeongbokgung Palace. National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (NRICH 2008, Fig. 265)



**4-3.** White Porcelain Shard with *keunbatsyo* (큰밭쇼) Inscription. Joseon, 17th century. Excavated from Jongmyojeongyo Bridge, riverbed sedimentary layer. Seoul Museum of History



**4-4.** White Porcelain Shard with *gyemi keunbatsyo* (계미 큰밭쇼) Inscription. Joseon, 1763. Excavated from the Gyeonghuigung Palace site. Seoul Museum of History

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, most inscriptions in Hangeul read *keunjeon* (큰전) or *keundyeon* (큰뎌). In this regard, it can be argued that the shards of the five white porcelain vessels bearing the inscription *keunso* discovered at the Hoeamsa Temple site must in some way be related to Queen Munjeong (文定王后, 1501–1565), who was a patron of many Buddhist rites held at the temple. Queen Munjeong was named grand royal queen dowager upon the enthronement of King Myeongjong (明宗, r. 1545–1567), and in the 20th year of his reign (1565) she sponsored the *mucha daehoe* (無遮大會, Grand rite of non-distinction) at Hoeamsa Temple. This entailed the participation of thousands of monks, and was evidently a grand and magnificent ceremony. Records state that the resources of the royal warehouses were depleted by the rite, attesting to the generosity of the queen's support for Buddhist ceremonies and projects (Entry for the fifth day of the fourth month of the 20th year, *Myeongjong'sillok*, vol. 31).

As in the case of *utsyo* inscriptions, when stippled *keunso*

inscriptions were replaced with *keunbatsyo*, the location of the inscription shifted from the base to the body next to the foot (Fig. 4-3). As mentioned above, *keunbatsyo* refers to the outer kitchen affiliated with the king's quarters, and in the nineteenth century the inscription *keunbatsyo* came to be replaced with *keundyeon gogan* (큰뎌고간) and a cyclical year name. A white porcelain shard discovered at the Gyeonghuigung Palace site bears the inscription *gyemi keunbatsyo* (계미 큰밭쇼). *Gyemi* (癸未) year is presumed to refer to 1763. The shard attests to the addition of cyclical year names to inscriptions on white porcelain (Fig. 4-4).

The inscriptions *utsyo*, *keunso*, and *daesyo* have been found not only on white porcelain vessels of the highest quality, but also on lower-quality vessels with bamboo-node-shaped feet that were fired stacked on top of each other with clay or sand spurs on the foot. These coarser vessels have their place of use marked on the unglazed base with ink inscriptions, providing evidence that white porcelain vessels of varied quality were indeed used in

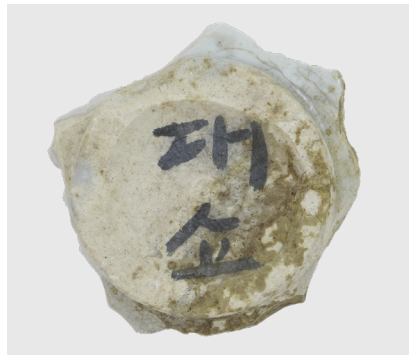
	Inscription	Location	Type of foot	Type of firing supports	Place of excavation/Source
1	<i>eusyo</i> (으쇼)	Base	Bamboo-node-shaped foot	Clay spurs	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8
2	<i>utsyo</i> (웃쇼)	Base	Bamboo-node-shaped foot	Sand spurs	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8
3	<i>utsyo</i> (웃쇼)	Base	Bamboo-node-shaped foot	Sand spurs	Cheongjin-dong District No. 1
4	<i>keunsyo</i> (큰쇼)	Base	Bamboo-node-shaped foot	Clay spurs	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16
5	<i>keunsyo</i> (큰쇼)	Base	Bamboo-node-shaped foot	Clay spurs	Sejong-no
6	<i>keunsyo</i> (큰쇼)	Base	Bamboo-node-shaped foot	Sand spurs	Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace
7	<i>daesyo</i> (대쇼)	Base	Bamboo-node-shaped foot	Clay spurs	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8
8	<i>daesyo</i> (대쇼)	Base	Bamboo-node-shaped foot	Clay spurs	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8

**Table 5.** White porcelain with ink Hangeul inscriptions related to *utsyo*, *keunsyo*, or *daesyo*

**Fig 5.** White porcelain with *utsyo*, *daesyo*, and *keunsyo*-related inscriptions



**5-1. White Porcelain Shard with Ink *utsyo* (웃쇼) Inscription.** Joseon, 16th century. Height: 2.0 cm, Diameter: 6.2 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 1. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2011a, Fig. 588)



**5-2. White Porcelain Shard with Ink *daesyo* (대쇼) Inscription.** Joseon, 16th century. Height: 1.9 cm, Diameter: 5.6 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 8. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013c, Fig. 412)



**5-3. White Porcelain Shard with ink *keunsyo* (큰쇼) Inscription.** Joseon, 16th century. Height: 4.9 cm, Diameter: 5.6 cm. Excavated from the Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace. National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (NRICH 2008, Fig. 256)

the royal palace (Table 5) (Fig. 5).

The Hangeul inscription *dongsyo* (동쇼) accompanied by Chinese characters such as 天, 地, 玄, 黃, 左, or 右 is also found on the base of white porcelain vessels produced at government kilns in the sixteenth century (Table 6) (Figs. 6-1 and 6-2). Rather than on the base, however, the inscription *dongsyo* on one white porcelain vessel excavated from the Eoyeongcheong site is located on the body next to the foot. It is presumed that this vessel is of a later date than the examples with *dongsyo* inscription from the Cheongjin-dong area, given that the center of its base bulges outwards and the cross-section of the foot takes on an inverted trapezoid shape (Fig. 6-3). There is also a white porcelain vessel which has a U-shaped cross-section and the inscription *dongbyatsyo* (동뵤쇼) on the body next to the foot (Fig. 6-4). The inscription

*dongsyo* refers to the royal kitchen for the Donggungjeon (東宮展), the crown prince's living quarters, and *dongbyatsyo* to the outer royal kitchen servicing the crown prince's quarters. The shard of a white porcelain bowl carrying the inscription *syesongung ansyo* (세손궁 안쇼), excavated at the site of the bridge at the entrance to Gyeonghuigung Palace, is believed to have been used in the inner royal kitchen of the crown prince's quarters.

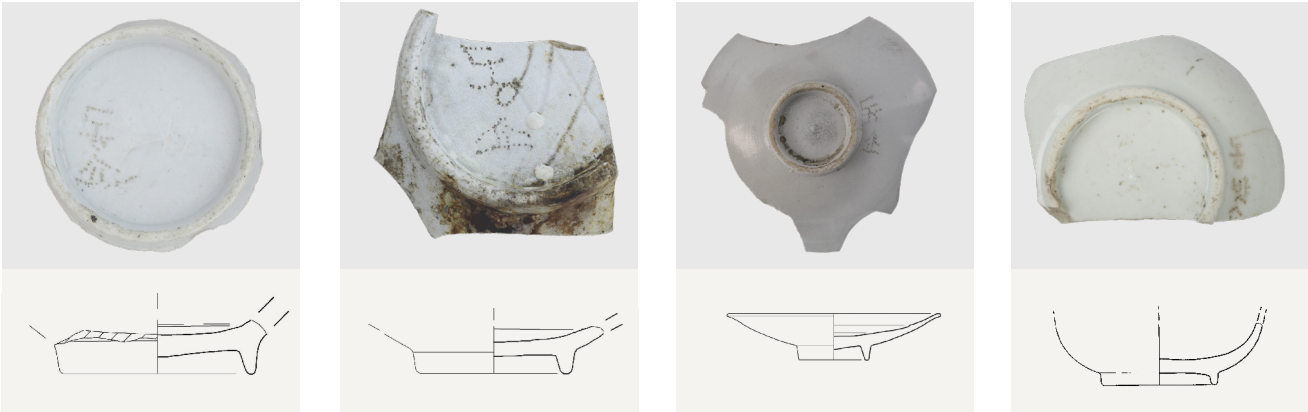
### Princes and Princesses

Sons and daughters born to the king's concubines were invested with the titles *gun* (君, prince) and *ongju* (翁主, princess), respectively. The names or titles of a number of these royal offspring have been found in Hangeul inscriptions stippled on white porcelain vessels, including four children of King Jungjong,

	Inscription	Type of inscription	Location	Accompanying Chinese-character inscription(s)	Place of excavation	Period
1	<i>dongsyo</i> (동쇼)	Stippled	Base	天 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 2 and 3	16th century
2	<i>dongsyo</i> (동쇼)	Stippled	Base	None	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
3	<i>dongsyo</i> (동쇼)	Stippled	Base	右 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
4	<i>dongsyo</i> (동쇼)	Stippled	Base	None	Cheongjin-dong District No. 1	
5	<i>dongsyo</i> (동쇼)	Stippled	Body, next to foot	None	Eoyeongcheong site	17th century
6	<i>dongbyatsyo</i> (동뵤쇼)	Stippled	Body, next to foot	None	Western wall site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	18th century
7	<i>Syesongung ansyo</i> (세손궁 안쇼)	Stippled	Body, next to foot	None	Lower part of Geumcheongyo Bridge at the Gyeonghuigung Palace site	

**Table 6.** White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to *dongsyo*

Fig. 6. White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to *dongsyo*



**6-1.** 天 incised on *White Porcelain Bowl Shard with dongsyo* (동소) *Inscription*. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 2.1 cm, Diameter: 7.5 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 2 and 3. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013b, p. 474)

**6-2.** 右 incised on *White Porcelain Bowl Shard with dongsyo* (동소) *Inscription*. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 2.5 cm, Diameter: 6.7 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013d, Fig. 858)

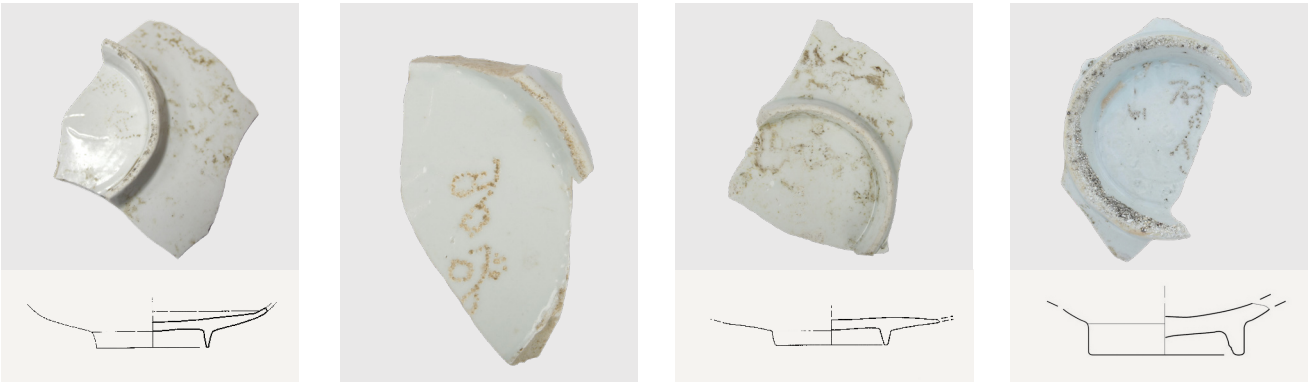
**6-3.** *White Porcelain Shard with dongsyo* (동소) *Inscription*. Joseon, 17th century. Height: 4.0 cm, Diameter: 6.8 cm (foot). Excavated from the Eoyeongcheong site. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2011b, Fig. 177–4)

**6-4.** *White Porcelain Bowl Shard with dongbyatsyo* (동뵈쇼) *Inscription*. Joseon, 18th century. Height: 3.8 cm, Diameter: 7.2 cm (foot). Excavated from the western wall site in Gyeongbokgung Palace. National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (NRICH 2011b, Fig. 327)

	Inscription (year of birth and death)	Location	Accompanying Chinese-character inscription(s)	Place of excavation	Period
1	hyesun (혜순, 1512–1583)	Base	天 (incised)	Sangbang site in Changdeokgung Palace	1522
2	yeongyang (영양, 1521–1561)	Base	玄 (incised)	Hyeopsaengmun Gate site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	1532
3		Base	?	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
4	deokheung (덕흥, 1530–1559)	Base	None	Gwanghwamun Gate site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	c. 1538–1542
5	jyeongsin (정신, 1526–1552)	Base	上 (stippled)	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8	c. 1526–1552
6	isyeong (이성, 1576–1588)	Base	大 (stippled), 上 (incised)	Cheongjin-dong District No. 1	c. 1583
7	dyongsin (영신, 1583–1653)	Base	?	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8	c. 1593
8	yeonnyeonggun gyeotjyubang (연령군 계주방, 1699–1719)	Body, next to foot	None	Private collection	c. 1703–1708
9	hwasyuno (화순오 . . . , 1720–1758)	Body, next to foot	?	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	c. 1725–1732

Table 7. White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to princes and princesses

Fig. 7. White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to princes and princesses



**7-1.** 天 incised on *White Porcelain Dish Shard with hyesun* (혜순) *Inscription*. Joseon, c. 1522. Excavated from the Sangbang site in Changdeokgung Palace. Research Institute of Korean Architectural Culture, Myongji University

**7-2.** 玄 incised on *White Porcelain Shard with yeongyang* (영양) *Inscription*. Joseon, c. 1532. Height: 2.4 cm, Diameter: 11.9 cm (foot). Excavated from the Hyeopsaengmun Gate site in Gyeongbokgung Palace. National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (NRICH 2011c, Fig. 88)

**7-3.** *White Porcelain Dish Shard with deokheung* (덕흥) *Inscription*. Joseon, c. 1538–1542. Height: 2.1 cm. Excavated from the Gwanghwamun Gate site in Gyeongbokgung Palace. National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (NRICH 2011a, Fig. 123)

**7-4.** 上 incised on *White Porcelain Shard with jyeongsin* (정신) *Inscription*. Joseon, c. 1526–1522. Height: 2.7 cm, Diameter: 7.8 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 8. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013c, Fig. 531)



two children of King Seonjo (宣祖, r. 1567–1608), one child of King Sukjong (肅宗, r. 1674–1720), and one child of King Yeongjo (英祖, r. 1724–1776) (Table 7). White porcelain vessels bearing the names or titles of these princes and princesses have been excavated from Gyeongbokgung Palace, Changdeokgung Palace, and the Cheongjin-dong area. It is presumed that they were used in the living quarters of the princes and princesses within the palace before they moved out to their own private residences.

The white porcelain shard bearing the inscription *hyesun* (혜순) that was excavated from the Sangbang (尙房, Bureau of Royal Attire) site in Changdeokgung Palace also has the character 天 incised on its base (Fig. 7-1). The inscription *hyesun* refers to Princess Hyesun (惠順翁主, 1512–1583), a daughter of King Jungjong and Royal Noble Consort Gyeongbin of the Park clan (敬嬪 朴氏, died 1533). The princess left the palace upon her marriage to an official named Kim Ingyeong (金仁慶, 1514–1583) in 1522, so the vessel inscribed with her name would have been used within the palace prior to 1522.

Two white porcelain shards with the inscription *yeongyang* (영양) are remnants of high-quality pieces made at the official government kilns. They also show the Chinese character 玄 incised on the base, indicating that they are wares of the finest quality made for use in the royal palace (Fig. 7-2). The inscription *yeongyang* refers to Prince Yeongyang (永陽君, 1521–1561), a son of King Jungjong and Royal Consort Changbin of the An clan (昌嬪 安氏, 1499–1549). Considering the record stating that construction work was continuing on the private residence of the prince, who was set to be married in 1532, it can be supposed that he did indeed get married and leave the palace around that time.

The stippled inscription that starts with *deokheung* (덕흥-) on the base of a white porcelain vessel found at the site of Gwanghwamun Gate in Gyeongbokgung Palace refers to the second son of King Jungjong and Royal Consort Changbin, although part of the inscription has been lost (Fig. 7-3). This second son, Prince Deokheung (德興君, 1530–1559), the younger

brother of the abovementioned Prince Yeongyang, was the father of King Seonjo. He was invested with the title Prince Deokheung in 1538 and left the palace in 1542 upon his marriage to a member of the Hadong Jeong clan (河東 鄭氏).

A white porcelain shard excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 8 bears the stippled inscription *jeongsin* (정신) and the Chinese character 上. The former is presumed to be a reference to Princess Jeongsin (靜愼翁主, 1526–1552), the daughter of King Jungjong and Royal Consort Changbin (Fig. 7-4).

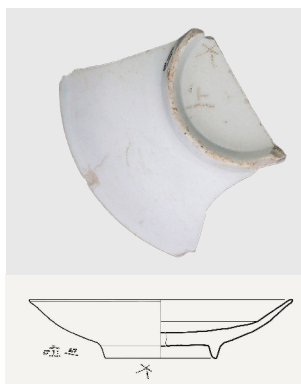
A white porcelain shard with the stippled Hangeul inscription *isyeong* (이성) on the exterior of the foot also has the Chinese characters 上 and 大 stippled on the base (Fig. 8-1). It is presumed that *isyeong* refers to Prince Uian, Yi Seong (義安君 李城, 1576–1588), son of King Seonjo and Royal Consort Inbin of the Kim clan (仁嬪 金氏, 1555–1613). Yi Seong was greatly favored by King Seonjo, who refurbished a royal residence in the most luxurious manner and presented it to Yi Seong in 1583. This residence was later referred to as Nambyeolgung Palace (南別宮). The 上 and 大 marks on the base, which respectively mean “upper” and “big,” suggest that the dish was originally used in the king’s quarters, the Daejeon, and then offered as a gift to Yi Seong. The fact that Yi Seong’s birth name rather than his invested title is stippled on the dish likely indicates that the dish was presented to him before he was invested as a prince. It is not known when Yi Seong was named a prince, but since such an investiture generally takes place after the age of six, it can be presumed that the dish inscribed with his name was used before he left the palace to move into Nambyeolgung in 1583.

The white porcelain shard discovered in Cheongjin-dong District No. 8 is only a portion of the lower body, but the stippled Hangeul inscription *dyeongsin* (형신) is visible on the outside of the foot (Fig. 8-2). This inscription is believed to refer to Princess Jeongsin (貞愼翁主, 1583–1653), a daughter of King Seonjo and Royal Consort Inbin, who left the palace in 1593 when she married Seo Gyeongju (徐景霄, 1579–1643). The white porcelain vessel inscribed with the name of the princess would have been

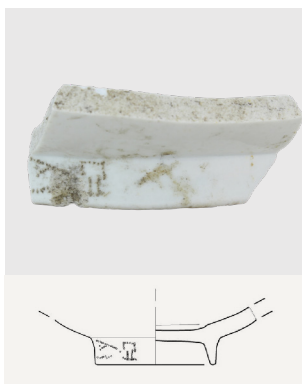
	Inscription	Location	Accompanying Chinese-character inscription(s)	Place of excavation	Period
1	<i>jinjeon</i> (진전)	Foot; Base	None	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8	16th century
2	<i>sadang banbitgan g</i> (수당 반빗간)	Interior base	天 incised	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
3	<i>sadang</i> (수당)	Interior base	None	Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16	
4	<i>syogyek</i> (소격)	Base	None	Yeonggunjikso site in Gyeongbokgung Palace	
5	<i>syogyek dyung</i> (소격 등)	Base	None	Cheongjin-dong District No. 8	
6	<i>jegui</i> (제귀)	Base	地 incised	Eoyeongcheong site	
7			天 incised	Eoyeongcheong site	
8			?	Cheongjin-dong District No. 1	
9	<i>heoni</i> (허니)	Base	None	Eoyeongcheong site	
10			地 incised	Eoyeongcheong site	
11			地 incised	Eoyeongcheong site	
12			None	Eoyeongcheong site	

Table 8. White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to rites and ceremonies

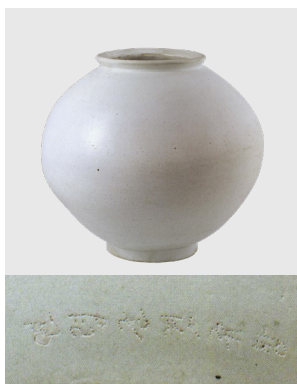
Fig. 8. White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to princes and princesses



8-1. 大 stippled and 上 incised and stippled on White Porcelain Dish Shard with *iseyeong* (이성) Inscription. Joseon, c. 1526–1552. Height: 4.8 cm, Diameter: 21.3 cm (mouth), 9.1 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 1. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2011a, Fig. 108)



8-2. White Porcelain Shard with *dyeongsin* (명신) Inscription. Joseon, c. 1593. Height: 3.2 cm, Diameter: 6.0 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 8. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013c, Fig. 188)



8-3. White Porcelain Jar with *yeonnyeonggun gyeotjyubang* (연령군 것주방) Inscription. Joseon, c. 1703–1708. Height: 37.2 cm. Private collection (Seoul Auction 2006, Lot. 84)



8-4. White Porcelain Shard with *hwasun-o* (화순오) Inscription. Joseon, 1725–1732. Height: 2.7 cm. Excavated from Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 12–16. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013d, Fig. 621)

Fig. 9. White porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to rites and ceremonies



9-1. White Porcelain Shard with *jinjaen* (진전) Inscription. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 2.9 cm, Diameter: 9.0 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 8. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013c, Fig. 133)



9-2. 天 incised on White Porcelain Shard with *gyegui* (제귀) Inscription. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 3.5 cm, Diameter: 8.7 cm (foot). Excavated from the Eoyeongchong site. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2011b, Fig. 178–2)



9-3. 地 incised on White Porcelain Shard with *heoni* (허니) Inscription. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 3.3 cm, Diameter: 8.6 cm (foot). Excavated from the Eoyeongchong site. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2011b, Fig. 163–5)



9-4. White Porcelain Shard with “*syogyeok dyung*” (소격 동) Inscription. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 2.4 cm, Diameter: 6.0 cm. Excavated from Cheongjin-dong District No. 8. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013c, Fig. 257)

used in the palace before she left it in 1593.

Vessels produced later than the sixteenth century inscribed with the names of princes and princesses have also been found. A shard of a white porcelain jar in a private collection shows the stippled Hangeul inscription *yeonnyeonggun gyeotjyubang* (연령군 것주방) on the body next to the foot (Fig. 8-3). Prince Yeonnyeong (延齡君, 1699–1719) was the son of King Sukjong and Royal Consort Myeongbin of the Park clan (裨嬪 朴氏, died 1703) and was invested as prince in 1703. King Sukjong greatly favored Prince Yeonnyeong over his other two sons who were later crowned as King Gyeongjong (景宗, r. 1720–1724) and King Yeongjo, respectively, and incited protests among his officials when he spent an inordinate amount of money on a private home for Prince Yeonnyeong upon his departure from the palace in 1708. It is thought that this white porcelain jar was made between

1703, the year of Yeonnyeong's investiture, and 1708, when he left the palace. As for *gyeotjyubang*, which is inscribed alongside the prince's name, *gyeot* means side, and *jyubang* appears to mean kitchen (廚房).

The stippled Hangeul inscription *hwasun-o* (화순오) located on the body next to the foot on a white porcelain shard refers to Princess Hwasun (和順翁主, 1720–1758), a daughter of King Yeongjo and Royal Consort Jeongbin of the Yi clan (靖嬪 李氏, died 1721) (Fig. 8-4). Hwasun was invested as a princess in 1725 and left the palace in 1732 when she married Kim Hansin (金漢璽, 1720–1758), so the vessel would have been used in the palace at some point between those years.

### Ceremonies and Ancestral Rites

Hangeul inscriptions related to ceremonies and ancestral rites

include *jinyeon* (진전), *sadang* (수당), *syogyek* (쇼격), *jyegui* (제귀), and *heoni* (허니), as seen in Table 8. *Jinyeon* refers to Junwonjeon (璿源殿), the royal portrait hall where the kings' portraits were enshrined (Fig. 9-1), while *sadang* or *sadang banbitgan* (수당 반빗간) refers to a ritual facility either inside or outside of the palace where the royal ancestral tablets were enshrined. *Jyegui* (제귀) and *heoni* are old Hangeul transcriptions of the Chinese characters 祭器 (*jegi*, ritual vessel) and 獻彝 (*heoni*, ritual liquor ewer). Considering the forms of the vessels and the accompanying incised Chinese characters, such as 天 and 地, these vessels can be assumed to have been made in the sixteenth century (Figs. 9-2 and 9-3). The white porcelain vessel inscribed with the word *syogyek* (쇼격) would have been used at the Sogyekseo (昭格署), a government organization from the early Joseon period that managed Taoist rites for praying for the welfare of the royal household and the nation (Fig. 9-4). The Sogyekseo was repeatedly shut down and reopened during the early Joseon period, but closed for good after the Japanese invasions of the sixteenth century. The fact that no Chinese character marks accompany the Hangeul inscription and that the foot is thicker than earlier examples indicate that the vessel bearing the inscription *syogyek* was used between 1522 and the launch of the Japanese invasions in 1592.

### Changes in Royalty-related Hangeul Inscriptions over Time and Reasons for Their Inclusion

The above examination of the stippled Hangeul inscriptions on Joseon white porcelain excavated from sites within the city wall of Seoul shows that the inscriptions from the first half of the Joseon period are closely related to the royal family. This section examines in detail aspects that have not been dealt with in the existing research: when the stippled Hangeul inscriptions were made, changes in the inscriptions over time, and the reasons behind their use.

Among the white porcelain vessels used in the royal palace bearing inscriptions including *utjen* (웃젠), *utje* (웃제), *utgung* (웃궁), *utsyo* (웃쇼), *keunsyo* (큰쇼), *daesyo* (대쇼), and *dongsyo* (동쇼) and the white porcelain vessels used for ceremonial or ritual purposes bearing inscriptions including *jinyeon* (진전), *sadang banbitgan* (수당 반빗간), *jyegui* (제귀), and *heoni* (허니), many have additional Chinese characters such as 天, 地, 玄, 黃, 左, and 右 inscribed on the base. As it is presumed that white porcelain vessels with such Chinese characters incised at the time of their production at the kilns date from around the sixteenth century, it can be concluded that stippled Hangeul inscriptions began to appear by at least the first half of the sixteenth century. In

addition, it should be noted that examples of vessels with stippled inscriptions of the names of princes and princesses appeared mostly in the period spanning the reigns of King Jungjong and King Seonjo, and that the Sogyekseo, the institute where vessels bearing the inscription *syogyek* (쇼격) were used, was shut down after the Japanese invasions (1592–98). Considering the above points, it is likely that the majority of royal wares with the abovementioned Hangeul inscriptions were manufactured during the reign of King Jungjong.

Compared to their sixteenth-century counterparts, white porcelain examples from the seventeenth century bearing inscriptions such as *utsyo*, *dongsyo*, and *daesyo* generally have a lesser degree of white colour and are of lower quality, with thicker walls and a foot that tends to be shorter and thicker. Moreover, the addition of incised cyclical year names such as 別 甲戌 and 左 乙八十 on the base of vessels bearing the *daesyo* inscription aligns with the seventeenth-century practice of inscribing cyclical year names on vessels produced at the official government kilns. Another point concerning vessels marked with *daesyo* or *dongsyo* is that the inscription is placed on the body next to the foot, indicating that at some time around the first half of the seventeenth century the location for the inscription shifted from the base to the lower part of the body.

Stippled Hangeul inscriptions including *udansyo*, *utbatsyo*, *keunbatsyo*, *dongbatsyo*, and *syesongung ansyo* have also been found on vessels from the first half of the eighteenth century. These inscriptions reveal that the royal kitchen consisted of two sections, an inner kitchen (*ansyo*) responsible for daily meals and an outer kitchen (*batsyo*) responsible for banquet food. They also evidence that the practice of locating the inscription on the body rather than the base had become firmly established by this time. The white porcelain vessels with stippled inscriptions from this period show a higher degree of pure white color than those of the previous century, along with a shorter foot with a U-shaped cross-section. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, cyclical year names were added to the stippled Hangeul inscriptions that referenced the royal kitchens, as seen in the shards of white porcelain with the inscriptions *muo utbatsyo* (무오 옷밖쇼, 1798), *jeongmi utdyeonansyo* (정미 옷뎌안쇼, 1787), *gyemi keunbatsyo* (계미 큰밖쇼, 1763), and *gabo hyebingungsaeng* (갑오 해방궁성, 1774).

Another category of stippled Hangeul inscriptions encompasses those that refer to both specific members of the royal family and their places of residence. These include *utsyo* for the royal kitchen of the (grand) royal queen dowager's quarters, *daesyo* and *keunsyo* for the royal kitchen of the king's quarters, *dongsyo* for the inner royal kitchen of the crown prince's quarters, and other inscriptions indicating the royal kitchen of the royal grandson's quarters, the quarters of princes and princesses, and the inner royal kitchen for smaller palaces and royal residences such as Sujingung (壽進宮), Suguigung (淑儀



**10-1. White Porcelain Shard with *syujungung* (수진궁) Inscription.** Joseon, 17th century. Height: 2.5 cm, Diameter: 7.2 cm (foot). Excavated from Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 2 and 3. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013b, p. 9)



**10-2. White Porcelain Shard with *hyebingung ansyo* (혜빙궁 안소) Inscription.** Joseon, 1763–1776. Excavated from the Gyeonghuigung Palace site. Research Institute of Korean Architectural Culture, Myongji University



**10-3. White Porcelain Shard with *gabo hyebingungsaeng* (갑오 혜빙궁성) Inscription.** Joseon, 1774. Height: 3.0 cm, Diameter: 5.6 cm (foot). Excavated from the Eoyeongcheong site. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2011b, Fig. 152-6)

宮), and Hyeongung Palaces. Not all white porcelain vessels brought into a royal palace were marked with stippled Hangeul inscriptions. It seems that those vessels that were considered to be private possessions of members of the royal family were specially marked with stippled inscriptions indicating their place of use. The following record from 1663, the fourth year of the reign of King Hyeonjong (顯宗, 1659–1674) lends some support to this argument.

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“Following the old state conventions, kings and queens maintained their own private assets. The king had his own personal treasury called Naesusa (內需司), while the queen, the royal queen dowager, and the grand royal queen dowager each also kept her own private treasury. Examples include Sujungung Palace, Eouigung Palace (於義宮), and Myeongnyegung Palace (明禮宮). The private residence of a prince who had no offspring or the residence of a king before his ascension to the throne were also assigned a palace name. These palaces were given over to the private ownership of kings and queens and were managed by male court eunuchs. Any favors bestowed on royal relatives or any other demands outside the stipulated law had to be covered with money generated from those palaces. Over time, these palaces grew in scale, coming to include considerable farmland and leading to the exploitation of bonded servants and attracting all kinds of wicked people. However, local government offices could say nothing about the matter and legal officials could not place any prohibitions. Everyone cited this situation as an indictment of the times.” (Entry for the fifth day of the ninth month of the fourth year, *Hyeonjong gaesu sillok*, vol. 9)

The above record indicates that during the reign of King Hyeonjong, the king, the grand royal queen dowager, the royal queen dowager, and the queen all maintained private property in the form of the Naesusa, Sujungung Palace, Eouigung Palace,

and Myeongnyegung Palace, respectively. The profits from these palaces were used to purchase the goods required for the living quarters of each royal personage. As explained above, the inscriptions *utjung* and *utye* respectively refer to the royal queen dowager’s private treasury and maiden home, which constitute her private property. These privately-held assets were used to bestow favors on relatives and meet needs falling outside of those prescribed by law. One case in point was money dedicated to the patronage of Buddhism, such as the abovementioned grand rite of non-distinction, or *mucha daehoe* held at Hoeamsa Temple in 1565 under the sponsorship of Queen Munjeong. The shards of white porcelain bearing the inscription *keunsyo* and the many other white porcelain vessels for royal use excavated from the Hoeamsa Temple site attest to royal patronage of Buddhism out of the queen’s private funds. The white porcelain shard with the inscription *syujungung* (수진궁) excavated from Cheongjin-dong Districts Nos. 2 and 3 was used at Sujungung Palace, the private property that belonged to the grand royal queen dowager or the royal queen dowager, while the shard bearing the inscription *hyebingung* (혜빙궁) presumably refers to Yongdonggung Palace, a major private royal residence and treasury where Royal Princess Consort Hyebin of the Hong clan, or Lady Hyegyeong lived after the death of her husband, Crown Prince Sado (思悼世子, 1735–1762) (Figs. 10-1 through 10-3).

The royal private property described above entailed assets that generated profits based on land and bonded servants belonging to the area bestowed to each royal residence (Entry for the fifth day of the ninth month of the fourth year, *Hyeonjong gaesu sillok*, vol. 9). In this regard, the stippled Chinese-character inscription 大處庄 (*daecheojang*) on the base of a celadon shard excavated from the royal kitchen site in Gyeongbokgung Palace is a notable artifact (Fig. 11-1). *Daecheo* (大處) pertains to the Daejeon (大殿), the king’s quarters at the royal palace, while *jang* (庄) means privately owned royal land. It is presumed that *dae-*



Fig. 11. Shards with inscriptions related to 處



**11-1.** Celadon Shard with 大處庄 Inscription. Joseon, 16th-17th century. Height: 5.3 cm, Diameter: 6.85 cm (foot). Excavated from the Sojubang site in Gyeongbokgung Palace. National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (NRICH 2008, Fig. 240)



**11-2.** White Porcelain Shard with 處 Inscription in Underglazed Iron-brown. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 2.1 cm, Diameter: 9.2 cm (foot). Excavated from Sejong-no District No. 2. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013a, Fig. 316)



**11-3.** White Porcelain Shard with 處 Inscription. Joseon, 16th century. Height: 4.0 cm, Diameter: 6.8 cm (foot). Excavated from Sejong-no District No. 2. Hanul Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (HRICH 2013a, Fig. 318)

*cheojang* is a reference to the king's private assets managed by the royal treasury Naesusa. Along these lines, two white porcelain shards presumably from the sixteenth century and with the character 處 (*cheo*) on the base (one incised and the other painted in iron-brown pigment) are likely also associated with private royal property (Figs. 11-2 and 11-3).

Hangeul inscriptions are found not only on items used in the living quarters of members of the royal family, but also on ritual and ceremonial vessels, which are similarly considered to pertain to the private treasuries of the royal household. One of the responsibilities of the private royal treasuries was to procure all vessels and other sundry goods needed for the performance of royal ancestral rites. For example, Sujung Palace functioned not only as a private treasury but also as the site for rites for princes who died before their investiture or princesses who died before they were married. Other private palaces also served as treasuries that procured and prepared the goods needed at rites.

In sum, during the latter half of the Joseon dynasty, the major private property of the royal family was comprised of the so-called “one office and four palaces” (一司四宮, *ilsa sagung*), that is, the king's royal treasury Naesusa along with Sujung, Myeongnyegung, Yongdonggung, and Eouigung Palaces. Based on profits from land and tribute goods, these five institutions supplied goods needed within the official royal palace inhabited by the king and queens. These included the goods required by the palace halls (殿, *jeon*) that served as the living quarters of individual members of the royal family, each hall with its six attached departments (六處所, *yukcheoso*), including the inner and outer kitchens. White porcelain vessels that came into the palace as part of the royal household's private property were inscribed in Hangeul with the name of their place of use stippled to mark them as the property of the royal family and to minimize the risk of loss.

The production of white porcelain with stippled Hangeul inscriptions in the sixteenth century is similar to the production of *buncheong* ware (粉靑沙器, *buncheong sagi*) with inscriptions related to the Wangsilbu (王室府, Office of the Royal Household) during the first half of the fifteenth century. In the early Joseon period, the Wangsilbu oversaw the private property of the royal family and the supply of goods to the palace, addressing the needs of a selected number of people within the royal family, including any living former king, the crown prince, and the queen. The Wangsilbu possessed independent financial resources and held its own assets, allowing it to function as the palace supply organ with the exclusive right to commission the production of ceramics with pertinent inscriptions. Although the Wangsilbu was abolished in the latter half of the fifteenth century, its functions were assumed by the “one office and four palaces” system that constituted the private treasuries of the royal household.

## Conclusion

One recent achievement of the excavation of the early Joseon layer in the old city center of Seoul, an area concentrated around the palace sites and their surroundings, is the discovery of a large number of white porcelain vessels bearing inscriptions in Hangeul. With a particular focus on vessels with inscriptions indicating a connection with the royal family, this paper has examined the meaning of these inscriptions, where the vessels were used, when the stippling technique was used, and the

reason for making such inscriptions.

Among the Hangeul inscriptions, those that read *utsyo* (웃쇼), *keunsyo* (큰쇼), *daesyo* (대쇼), and *dongsyo* (동쇼) are believed to refer to the Sojubang, the royal kitchen attached to the living quarters of the grand royal queen dowager, the royal queen dowager, the king, and the crown prince. Inscriptions such as *utgung* (웃궁) and *utjye* (웃제) are seen as references to the private property of the grand royal queen dowager or the royal queen dowager, while inscriptions such as *hyesun* (혜순), *yeongyang* (영양), *deokheung* (덕흥), *jyeongsin* (정신), *isyeong* (이성), and *dyeongsin* (당신) are thought to be related to the invested titles of the princes and princesses born to King Jungjong or King Seonjo. Based on the content and meaning of the inscriptions, it is estimated that concentrated production of stippled Hangeul inscriptions on white porcelain began during the reign of King Jungjong in the first half of the sixteenth century. During the sixteenth century, inscriptions related to the royal family were executed using the stippling technique on the base of the vessel, but in the seventeenth century the inscription was shifted to the body next to the foot. Between the latter half of the seventeenth century and the early eighteenth century when the Sojubang, the royal kitchen in the palace, was divided into inner and outer kitchens, Hangeul inscriptions on white porcelain came to distinguish between these kitchens, as evidenced by the inscriptions of *udansyo* (웃안쇼), *utbatsyo* (웃밭쇼), *keunbatsyo* (큰밭쇼), and *dongbatsyo* (동밭쇼).

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, cyclical year names were added to the inscriptions. The marking of white porcelain wares with stippled Hangeul inscriptions related to members of the royal family during the sixteenth century is presumed to have been connected to the supply of goods to the royal family via the private royal treasuries.

The stippled inscriptions of *syujingung* (슈진궁), *hyebingung* (혜빙궁), 大處庄 (*daecheojang*), and 處 (*cheo*) on white porcelain from the sixteenth century are identified to have relation to the one office and four palaces that managed private assets of the royal family members. It is assumed that such inscriptions were stippled on royal white porcelain wares to mark the place of use, thereby making it clear that the vessels belonged to the royal household's private property and minimizing the risk of loss.

### Translated by Cho Yoonjung

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