

ISSN 1598-2661 (Print)  
ISSN 2586-0380 (Online)

# SUNGKYUN JOURNAL OF EAST ASIAN STUDIES

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Vol.17 No.2

OCT. 2017



Academy of East Asian Studies  
Sungkyunkwan University

## The Matrix of Gender, Knowledge, and Writing in the *Kyuhap Ch'ongsö*\*

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### ABSTRACT

The concept of gendered knowledge is often examined based on the hypothesis that women's writings deal with intimate and personal concerns in the domestic sphere, while their male counterparts are concerned with professional achievements. The spatial division between men and women in traditional Korea likely impacted the process of knowledge formation, as knowledge requires interaction with the world. Against this backdrop, the *Kyuhap ch'ongsö* (The encyclopedia of women's daily life), written by Yi Pinghögak (1759–1824), reveals conflicts and tensions in the binary structures of male and female, public and domestic, and classical and vernacular. This article therefore investigates the construction of gendered knowledge envisioned in *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* and explores the positioning of the female author in collecting, classifying, and translating knowledge. It reveals how diverse constituents in this encyclopedic work have not only contributed to but also challenged the claims of gendered norms and defines how the author navigates the cultural and literary heterogeneity of knowledge that transcends the demarcation of gender.

**Keywords:** encyclopedia, knowledge, gender, intertextuality, translation, vernacular language, women's writing, Yi Pinghögak, *Kyuhap ch'ongsö*

The *Kyuhap ch'ongsö* (The encyclopedia of women's daily life),<sup>1</sup> written in the vernacular between 1809 and 1822, was compiled when encyclopedic works in classical Chinese produced by local *yangban* families proliferated in Korea under the belated influence of such writings from Ming China. Among many other texts, this encyclopedia has received special attention because the author was a woman. The time in which the author Yi Pinghögak lived was shaped by the doctrines of Neo-Confucian ideology and a patriarchal system that imposed restrictions on women's participation in the public realm. Therefore, while noblemen and the more prosperous males in the social hierarchy had access to education, women's participation in higher education and scholarly activities was restricted. Moreover, the content of women's education concentrated on the promotion of female virtues and morality through the distribution of conduct books, including *Liezu zhuan* (Collected biographies of women) and *Nujie* (Admonitions for women), and the vernacular editions of *Naehun* (Instructions for the inner quarters).<sup>2</sup> Since women were given limited access to literary Chinese, female literacy relied

almost exclusively on the *han'gŭl* script. The devices of oral transmission and the vernacular therefore served as a significant medium of communication for women, for both ordinary and intellectual purposes. In these circumstances, the public production of knowledge was more frequently associated with men than with women, and with classical Chinese than vernacular Korean; women's achievements in scholarly and popular writings were therefore largely marginalized or ignored.

Under such circumstances, Yi Pinghögak is considered one of several notable woman scholars who deserve to be restored to a significant place in the intellectual history of late Chosŏn. Along with her, Im Yunjidang (1721–1793), Yi Sajudang (1739–1821), and Kang Chŏng'ildang (1772–1832) are also considered important female intellectuals who have attracted scholarly attention for their intelligence, capabilities, and academic contributions (Yi Hyesun 2007, 19). These scholars are also described as the vanguard of female writers who deepened understanding of Confucian learning, and many have cited their works as an example of *yŏsŏng sirhak* (women's practical learning) (Chŏng Haeün 1997, 310–16), with some interpreting *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* as a product of practical learning (Pak Okchu 2000, 293; Yi Hyesun 2007, 193), although these women are not directly connected to *sirhak* scholars.

Women's intellectual activities are often connected to a gendered approach in which the quintessential topics in the text are taken to be exclusive to women, thus stressing the essentialized qualities of women's experience. The notion of gendered knowledge tends to treat women not only as observers of the social norms but also as having expertise and knowledge in the specialized area of the domestic realm. Popular books and articles dealing with Yi's encyclopedia often frame the text as a source of home management and promise that her text will help the reader appreciate the authenticity and uniqueness of Chosŏn women's wisdom and knowledge. Such topics as *pongim* (sewing), *yŏmsaek* (dyeing), and *seüi* (washing clothes) are selectively analyzed and highlighted among the various topics of the text (Pak Kyŏngja 1983, 119–33). Such interpretative links between knowledge and gender can be found as early as a 1939 newspaper article that states: "Recently, a precious and fascinating work of a Chosŏn woman has been found that deals with food and drink, sewing, farming, medicine, and divination. . . . This collection of Yi Pinghögak is the brilliant culmination of Chosŏn *kyusu*

\* This article was supported by a Keimyung University Research Grant in 2015. I would like to thank the university for its generous support. I would also like to express my gratitude to the anonymous peer reviewers and the journal editors for their comments and suggestions, which were very helpful in improving this article.

<sup>1</sup> The extant editions of *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* are the Karam edition (woodblock), the Pūnyŏ p'ilchi edition (hand-copied), the National Library edition (hand-copied), the Eihei edition (found in Eihei Temple 永平寺), two Tokyo University Library editions (hand-copied), and three editions discovered by Chŏng Yangwan, called the Chŏng Yangwan editions (hand-copied). The complete original text is not extant; the medical chapter "Ch'ŏngnang kyŏl" is found only in the Eihei edition. Among those editions, the most recent, compiled and edited by Chŏng Yangwan, was selected as the primary text for this study. Please see Chŏng Yangwan, ed., *Kyuhap ch'ongsŏ* (Seoul: Pojinjae, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> For details, please refer to Peter Kornicki, "Books for Women and Women Readers," in *The Book Worlds of East Asia and Europe, 1450–1850: Connections and Comparisons*, ed. Joseph P. McDermott and Peter Burke (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), 283–320.

*munhak* (women's literature).<sup>3</sup> It was also claimed that the encyclopedia reveals a gendered view on the matters and practices of Chosŏn society (Kang Hanyŏng 1963, 193). Remarkably, this tendency has endured, as seen in a recent article that presented *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* as a recipe book that constitutes "an invaluable source illustrating the food culture of *yangban* during the late Chosŏn period."<sup>4</sup>

Often such feminine specificity is extended to support the framework of the uniqueness of women's experience, but such gender specificity can be understood as hampering the objective of accessing the truth (Haraway 1988, 575; Harding 2002, 352). Although the author's gender can be a significant component in the analysis of his or her writings, over-emphasis on gender identity limits our insights in assessing the author's experience and intention when we only associate women's capacities with housework. Yi Pinghŏgak's work enables us to critique the mistaken view that the encyclopedia will unmask the invisible and unique dimension of a woman's life. Thus, this article presents the encyclopedia as a reflection of Yi's domestic experience, while exploring how her work challenges male claims to unique insights into science, history, and medicine.

Until now, research and studies from various disciplines have often engaged with the discrete parts of the encyclopedia and consequently failed to grasp the scope and complexity of this work as a whole. Scholarly examinations of the philological and biographical facts of the encyclopedia often deal with it as if it is not a coherent whole.<sup>5</sup> This article takes a different approach by revealing that the encyclopedia possesses a coherent scheme and unifying perspective in terms of the treatment of the content, which signifies that Yi did not merely repeat and reproduce chunks of knowledge, but instead exercised her agency in collecting and displaying facts filtered through her subjectivity, translating knowledge into the vernacular. Following this approach, this study examines the complex processes that were a part of the collecting, arranging, and translating of every one of the entries in this work. By doing so, this study attempts to rethink the assumed connection between womanhood and the boundaries of knowledge. The results of this study therefore shed light on how knowledge presented by Yi bridged the gaps between man and woman, private and public, and classical and vernacular, as she participated in the culture of writing and the reproduction of knowledge.

<sup>3</sup> "Kyuhap ch'ongsŏ," *Tonga ilbo*, February 30, 1939.

<sup>4</sup> "Kyuhap ch'ongsŏ," *Tonga ilbo*, July 15, 1993.

<sup>5</sup> Previous work on *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* incorporated discussions of the diverse subject matter it contained. I argue that these studies can be divided into three types. The first attempted to trace the origin and validity of the given text through a philological investigation (Kang Hanyŏng 1963; Chŏng Yangwan 1975a). Other scholars worked toward a gendered understanding of Yi's work. By analyzing her biographical history and background to define the relationship between Yi's personal life and her work, they argue that her education and access to classical sources helped provide her the ability and justification needed to compile her own encyclopedia (Chŏng Haeŭn 1997; Yi Hyesun 2007). Recent studies investigated the medical descriptions contained in her text and reveal how medical practice was conceptualized and organized in local households and folk culture (Wŏn 2002, 2005). These analyses support the view that the encyclopedia offers an important and unique venue for understanding the life of Chosŏn women and the inner quarters.

### Motives for Writing

Before encyclopedic writing became a popular practice among aristocratic families in the eighteenth century, the task of collecting, preserving, and circulating official writings, essays, petitions, and treatises fell to the state. As the government was responsible for preserving and controlling information, state-commissioned works dominated the literary world until the seventeenth century, when encyclopedias assembled by individual scholars first emerged. Yi Sugwang (1563–1628) was the first to explore a new genre of encyclopedia by compiling *Chibong yusöl* (Topical discourses of Chibong), which included 3,435 entries that discussed a wide variety of topics, such as astronomy, geography, politics, government positions, Confucianism, people, language, and botany (Sin Pyöngju 2014, 115–19). A further spate of encyclopedic works, labelled *yusö* or *ch'ongsö*,<sup>6</sup> were produced between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when Chosön intellectuals were influenced by sources from Qing China and Japan, as well as new learning from the West, which helped inspire scholars to collect and standardize accumulated knowledge (Kim Kyöngmi 2012, 338).

Yi Pinghögak's *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* was conceived in this social and cultural climate. While this achievement was made possible by Yi's erudition and literary skill in both Chinese and Korean, the motive for writing was significantly shaped by her family tradition. Yi Pinghögak was born in Seoul into a *yangban* lineage of prominent scholars. Her great-grandfather Yi Öngang (1648–1716) was a high official, rising to the position of minister of punishments, and her father served the Chosön government as a minister of personnel during the reign of Sukchong (1674–1720). Her male family members, including her father and older brother, were all active in politics as members of the *Soron* (the young disciples),<sup>7</sup> one of the two elite political factions in the late Chosön period. One of her aunts was Yi Sajudang,<sup>8</sup> who married Yu Han'gyu (1718–1783), her mother's younger brother. Yi Sajudang's essay, *Taegyo sin'gi* (New guidelines for prenatal care), later translated into the vernacular by her son, Yu Hüi (1773–1837), was widely read by mothers-to-be, since it conveys knowledge of prenatal education and emphasizes

<sup>6</sup> In East Asian tradition, encyclopedic writing has taken a form similar to miscellanies or anthologies. The earlier writings of *yusö* (C. *leishu* 類書) were conceived of as random collections of excerpts or abridgements of books, and gradually the concept of encyclopedia expanded to incorporate unabridged texts, non-literary genres, and practical knowledge; the latter are often categorized as *ch'ongsö* (C. *congshu* 叢書). For more information on this subject, see Peter Burke and Joseph McDermott, "The Proliferation of Reference Books, 1450–1850," in *The Book Worlds of East Asia and Europe, 1450–1850: Connections and Comparisons* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), 268–72.

<sup>7</sup> For details on Yi Pinghögak's life, see Chöng Haeün, "Chosön hugi yösöng sirhakcha Pinghögak Yi-ssi" [Pinghögak Yi, the female scholar of the *sirhak* school of the late Chosön period], *Yösöng kwa sahoe* 8 (1997): 303–04.

<sup>8</sup> Yi Sajudang and Yi Pinghögak are from the same Chönju Yi family clan. Yi Sajudang is thought to be the wife of the older brother of Pinghögak Yi's mother. There is substantial evidence that these two figures were close to each other despite the twenty-year age gap between them. Pinghögak Yi wrote the preface to Yi Sajudang's *Taegyo singi* and included it in *Kyuhap ch'ongsö*. Regarding this point, see Chöng Yangwan, "Kyuhap ch'ongsö e taehayo" [Regarding the *Kyuhap ch'ongsö*], *Kyuhap ch'ongsö* (Seoul: Pojinjae, 1975), 12; Chang Ch'örsu, "Kyuhap ch'ongsö üi minsokhakchök üimi" [The folkloric aspects of *Kyuhap ch'ongsö*], in *Kyuhap ch'ongsö* (Söngnam: Hanguk munhwa chöngsin munhwa yönguwön, 2001), 9.

the importance of a mother's mental and physical health and the psychological bond between a mother and her unborn baby. In this erudite and politically prestigious family, Yi could nurture her mind as a writer and scholar and proved herself a multi-faceted talent, well versed in history, poetry, and scholarly works.

Yi Pinghögak's marriage seems to have furthered her prospects as a serious seeker of knowledge. At the age of fifteen, Yi married Sŏ Yubon (1762–1822), the eldest son of Sŏ Hosu (1736–1799) of the Talsŏng clan.<sup>9</sup> The Sŏ family provided her with the library necessary to expand her knowledge of nature, cuisine, textiles, arts, and medicine. Sŏ Hosu, Yi's father-in-law, authored *Haedong nongsŏ* (Studies of agriculture in Korea), which displays a vast knowledge of astrology, mathematics, music, and nature. Sŏ Myŏnggŭng (1716–1787), the father of Sŏ Hosu, was well-known for his comprehensive work entitled *Kosa sinsŏ* (New interpretations of old affairs), which were sponsored and published by the Chosŏn state. In addition to Chosŏn's social system and foreign policies, this work covers other academic and practical subjects, including astrology, geography, rituals, medicine, martial arts, and folk culture. In addition, Sŏ Yubon's younger brother, Sŏ Yugu (1764–1845), was widely recognized as the writer of *Imwŏn kyŏngje chi* (Treatises on rural economy), which despite its name deals with more than agriculture and is the largest collection of treatises, theories, and knowledge in Chosŏn history.<sup>10</sup>

These hallowed scholarly traditions in her birth and marital families afforded Yi access to classical sources and literary materials that must have fostered her inclination to write on the topics familiar to her and record what she had learned. However, this background does not fully explain the motive, urge, or primary aim of her encyclopedia, as encyclopedic writing is not a simple description of facts. In fact, writing an encyclopedia requires a great deal of effort to cull and collate facts from various sources and describe the entries using expressions that are easy to understand. It is therefore unlikely that the determination to complete this work was born of a whim or fancy; rather, it involved a resolute will and voluntary sacrifice.

In the preface to *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life*,<sup>11</sup> it is stated that Yi launched this project in her fifties, after settling in a suburb of Seoul. It took a long time for her to prepare to begin writing and a decade to complete the encyclopedia, which she probably began writing in 1809.

In the fall of the *kisa* year (1809), I moved to Ginkgo Pavilion<sup>12</sup> at the Eastern Lake. Between

<sup>9</sup> Sŏ Yugu, "Sussi tanin Yissi myojimyŏng" 嫂氏端人李氏墓誌銘 [The memorial inscription for Madam Yi, the wife of my older brother], *P'ungsŏk chŏnjip* (Seoul: Pogyŏng munhwasa, 1983), 208.

<sup>10</sup> For more details about the Sŏ family and their common interests in working on encyclopedias, see Yi Hyesun, *Chosŏnjo hugi yŏsŏng chisŏng sa* [Intellectual history of women in the late Chosŏn period] (Seoul: Ewha Woman's University Press, 2007), 195–202.

<sup>11</sup> The edition of *Kyuhap ch'ongsŏ*, translated and annotated by Chŏng Yangwan, was selected as the primary material for this study from among the seven editions. I refer to Chŏng Yangwan, ed., *Kyuhap ch'ongsŏ* (Seoul: Pojinjae, 2007). For the preface, I also consulted the English translation in Yongho Ch'oe et al., eds., *Sources of Korean Tradition*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 68–9. Unless noted otherwise, all translations are the author's.

<sup>12</sup> The name of Haengjŏng (Ginkgo Pavilion) derives from the courtesy name of Sŏ Yubon.

preparing meals, from time to time, I visited my husband's study, where by chance I came across writings of practical use in our daily lives and hidden gems of knowledge, little known to the world. Whenever possible, I opened the books and thoroughly examined them. I did this for the purpose of broadening my knowledge and relieving boredom.<sup>13</sup>

This preface suggests her aspiration to initiate the compilation of an encyclopedia. It appears that her motive emerged from a scholarly habit—writing down what she found helpful for future use and trying to overcome a sense of boredom—which later turned into a resolute commitment. Yi accounted for her special interest in building knowledge from the fact that her marital family had preserved classic works and foreign books, and eventually, her exposure to the intellectual and literary world through them steered her toward writing an encyclopedia of her own. Historical records also reveal that Yi was erudite and studious in her youth and that she did not stop reading and writing even after marriage.

My wife selected a group of books and categorized them by the list of topics essential and instrumental to rural life. She was broadly informed about insects and fish and deeply understood rural household management. I referred to it as *The Encyclopedia of Everyday Life*.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, her husband's presence at home gave Yi opportunities to access the books and sources in his study and discuss them. Sō Yubon observed her keen interest in the natural sciences and her concerns about home management and thus became a private patron of her intellectual project.

Due to political and financial problems, however, her married life did not supply much in terms of security or material benefits. She adjusted to the modest means of her husband's household when he chose not to seek a government post. To alleviate their financial hardship, she and her husband decided to move from the capital to the suburbs when she was forty-eight. There, they engaged in weaving and raising silkworms, began farming, and grew tea to support her younger brother-in-law, Sō Yugu, who was exiled due to false allegations (Chōng Yangwan 1975, 98–101).<sup>15</sup> Yi became proficient in household management and busily engaged in textile production.<sup>16</sup> Reflecting her experiences as a household manager, the

<sup>13</sup> Yi Pinghōgak, "Kyuhap ch'ongsō sō," [Preface to *The encyclopedia of women's daily life*], in *Kyuhap ch'ongsō*, ed. Chōng Yangwan (Seoul: Pojinjae, 2007), 19.

<sup>14</sup> "Kanggō chabyōng" 江居雜詠 [Randomly humming poems while living in the country], *Chwaso sanin munjip* 1: 11a, in *Han'guk munjip ch'onggan*, vol. 106 (Seoul: Hanguk kojōn pōnyōgwōn, 2010), 8.

<sup>15</sup> Yi Pinghōgak's engagement in the cultivation of tea can be juxtaposed with the popular image of female tea-pickers in China. A Chinese study has shown that women's work had focused on making cloth, which, however, was not necessarily a year-round endeavor. Therefore, during the imperial period, women came to engage in a variety of economic tasks beyond the paradigm of womanly work. Especially in the hilly areas of southern China, harvesting and picking tea became popular among women. While they rarely entered the hall of womanly virtue for picking tea, gradually it came to be considered a feminine occupation. For further information, please see Lu Weijing, "Beyond the Paradigm: Tea-Picking Women in Imperial China," *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 4 (2004): 19–46.

<sup>16</sup> Sō Yubon, "Puch'ōp chōnun sinaeja" 復疊前韻示內子 [A poem on my wife, using the previous rhyme], *Chwaso sanin chip*, 1:24b, in *Han'guk munjip ch'onggan*, vol. 106 (Seoul: Han'guk kojōn pōnyōgwōn, 2010), 14.

entries in the encyclopedia came to cover a variety of topics that reveal the matters and concerns of rural life, including cooking, clothing, sewing, textiles, gardening, handicrafts, building, and household management.

### Systematizing Knowledge

Yi's encyclopedia is composed of the following five chapters: "Chusa üi" 酒食議 (Advice on beverages and food), "Pongim ch'ik" 縫紉則 (Guidelines for sewing and weaving), "San'ga rak" 山家樂 (Pleasure in a farm household), "Ch'öngnang kyöl" 靑囊訣 (A small book in a blue pocket), and "Sulsu ryak" 術數略 (Strategies for good luck).<sup>17</sup> The preface clearly states that the purpose of the work, around which these chapters were organized, is fulfilling the two objectives of maintaining good health and the good management of a household.

Then I remembered the old adage that good ideas which are not written down are no better than stupid ones. Were I not to write down what I had learned, that knowledge would not be saved from oblivion, nor could it benefit humanity. So I have selected the most concise and useful excerpts from the writings I have come across. Adding my own words, I have compiled them into five chapters. . . . Although this work has many entries, all of them are concerned primarily with maintaining a healthy life (*yangsaeng*) and with the methods necessary for managing a household. They are, in fact, all indispensable to daily life and deal with things women should investigate and study. Thus, with this preface, I write this encyclopedia for the daughters and daughters-in-law of our family.<sup>18</sup>

The first three chapters of Yi's work ("Chusa üi," "Pongim ch'ik," and "San'ga rak") are concerned with practical knowledge and the skills instrumental for household management, emphasizing the importance of preparing food, making clothes, and raising livestock. The first chapter discusses cooking, which was one of the main tasks of Chosön women, and provides information on preparing "medicinal beverages" (*yakchu*, i.e. alcoholic drinks), soy and bean pastes (*chang*), *kimch'i*, and various dishes, such as rice and porridge. Although the gender hierarchy confined women to the kitchen, *yangban* women enhanced their authority as supervisors who made culinary choices and took responsibility for teaching and passing on knowledge about cooking to other family members.<sup>19</sup> Yi's work presents her own categories and system of knowledge, beginning from principles and covering various methods for making drinks and food. A number of times she drew information from the *Sallim kyöngje* 山林經濟 (Farm management) by Hong Mansön (1643–1715) and *Chüngbo sallim kyöngje* 增補山林經濟 (The expanded edition of farm management), supplemented by the doctor and scholar Yu Chungim (fl. 1683–1766). These treatises dealt with such diverse topics as "*chip'o*" (gardening),

<sup>17</sup> Please note that the Chinese characters do not appear in the original text.

<sup>18</sup> Yi Pinghögak, "Kyuhap ch'ongsö sō," 20. This quote is from the English translation in Yongho Ch'oe et al., eds., *Sources of Korean Tradition*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 68–69.

<sup>19</sup> Recipes for food and beverages were considered an invaluable asset of the *yangban* family, especially after the establishment of *yangban* communities in local areas. See Pae Tongyöng (2014): 144–47.

“*söpsaeng*” (the rules of health), and “*kuhwang*” (famine relief), which reveals a growing male interest not only in agriculture but also in fine foods and cooking, while her reliance on male-authored treatises for information on cooking reveals Yi’s flexibility in producing and circulating knowledge across the gender divide.

The following chapter, “Pongim ch’ik,” introduces techniques and skills for weaving, dyeing, and dressmaking. Along with cooking, working with cloth was the area of knowledge most frequently associated with women, and in Confucian culture, elite women were encouraged to cultivate their virtue through embroidery, using their long fingernails and soft hands (Mann 1997, 159). This association reflects the spatial and economic constraints on female activities as belonging to the domestic sphere, although women’s engagement with textiles might enable them to enhance their subordinate status (Uno 1991, 17–41). Yi’s work provides knowledge concerning cloth production, particularly textile-related techniques of dyeing, ironing, washing, and embroidery along with detailed descriptions of methods for raising silkworms, all based on her own reflections and observations. The chapter also discusses general tips for household management: how to repair household objects; how to manage writing supplies, such as ink sticks, brushes, seals and stamp pads, and paper; how to clean and properly store items, including containers, mirrors, pottery, and jewels; and how to make lamp oil, incense, and copper containers. The chapter also gives practical artistic advice in terms of personal beauty, for instance, describing how to draw eyebrows, use *yönji* (rouge), and style hair, thereby revealing what it meant to be a properly made-up lady in Chosön society.

The third chapter, “San’ga rak,” focuses on farm management and also provides a significant amount of information about the natural world in terms of cultivating grains (*ogok*), vegetables and fruits (*silgwa*), and flowers (*yanghwa*), and raising livestock (*mogyang*). In particular, the author collected botanical information from various books on how to grow trees, fruits, and flowers, how to predict the weather for gardening, and how to care for horses, chickens, dogs, cats, and bees. At the time, male labor was associated with the outside world where men cultivated the land, tended crops, and grew food, whereas spinning, weaving, and sewing at home were predominantly female tasks. This encyclopedic exploration of areas of knowledge was not confined to culturally defined roles but rather affirms that the author’s experience as a farm manager offered an inspiration and stimulus to the further investigation and cataloguing of the lives of flowers, plants, and animals.

The last two chapters (“Chöngnang kyöl” and “Sulsu ryak”) are primarily concerned with how to maintain a healthy life (*yangsaeng*). In these chapters the author discusses medical tips and treatment regarding the human body and offers advice about how to conduct first aid. The fourth chapter, “Chöngnang kyöl,” provides practical information specifically related to pregnancy, childbirth, and first aid, whereas the fifth chapter, “Sulsu ryak,” presents miscellaneous information regarding geomancy, such as finding the best date and site for building a structure; how to orient buildings, doors, and kitchens; how to determine auspicious sites and dates on which to move and clean; and how to ward off evil and bad luck,

which could include illnesses and epidemics. In these chapters, the author does not exclude women from obtaining medical knowledge and redefines women's roles in administering first aid and providing urgent assistance to those in need, as the author describes methods for treating poisonings, injuries, and burns that require basic knowledge about the human body (Wŏn Poyŏng 2002, 126). Although medicine had long been perceived as masculine knowledge,<sup>20</sup> the encyclopedia offers a mature and critical appreciation of practical medicine by challenging the male-female dichotomy of doctors and patients. In the following section, to enhance our understanding of the author's status and view, the chapter "Ch'ŏngnang kyŏl" will be closely examined. This chapter will reveal how the individual components of the encyclopedia were assembled and arranged for display and how the author identified her role not only as a mediator but also as a creator of knowledge who actively engaged with earlier works and utilized her own system of organizing the knowledge she collected.

### Ways of Collecting

In writing an encyclopedia, collecting information and compiling entries can be compared with the art of creating the meanings of objects, as rather than merely reproducing knowledge, the collector (author) interweaves quotations from disparate sources into a singular text (Pearce 1993, 68–88).<sup>21</sup> Despite the different nature of objects and texts, the collected objects or pieces of information suggest a sense of the selfhood of the collector, and thus reading what is described and displayed in an encyclopedia can serve as an alternative way to understand the writer as a collector who demonstrates an achieved understanding of the subject matter and employs intellectual rationales for classifying all items and systematically organizing them into a complete set. The exploration of the relationship between the author and the collective knowledge contained in the encyclopedia not only reveals the complex interaction of different types of information disseminated in the late eighteenth century, but also informs us of the author's identity, experiences, and views.

The general topics of this encyclopedia address the importance of housekeeping and share important information about cooking, ingredients, farming, and clothing, and each entry exhibits a significant connection to major treatises, which were likely acquired by the Sŏ family, who had access to the royal archives and to foreign books. The references appearing in *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* are generally from treatises on agriculture (*nongsŏ* 農書). In particular, *Farm*

<sup>20</sup> The male *yūi* (scholar-doctors) and *chungin* (literally middle people, but used to refer to technical specialists) constituted the main practitioners in the field of medicine, especially following the Japanese invasions of the late sixteenth century, although there were a number of *ūinyō* (female health workers) at court, specialized in medicine during the Chosŏn period.

<sup>21</sup> Regarding the relationship between the collector and the object, Susan Pearce defines three modes of collecting: souvenir, fetishistic, and systematic. According to Pearce, taking objects as souvenirs implies the attitude that the objects are integral parts of the collector's personal past and experiences. In the fetish mode of collection, the relationship between the collector and the object is the obsessive attitude of the former towards the latter. The objects are not merely arranged by the collector but invite romantic notions and are considered extensions of the collector. In the systematic mode, the collector tends to follow an intellectual rationale and remains faithful to the collector's privately designed system. Please see Susan Pearce, *Museums, Objects, and Collections* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993).

*Management and The Expanded Edition of Farm Management* had a significant impact on Yi Pinghögak's work.

Although its reliance on previous accounts from classical works reveals the author's acceptance of existent knowledge, it also helps to prevent the text from being isolated from larger discussions of culture. For example, the fourth chapter introduces treatment methods for use in gynecology, obstetrics, and childcare, and drew upon the *Tongüi pogam* (Precious mirror of Eastern medicine, 1631) and *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management* (1766). Regarding Yi's major sources, the texts cited from most to least frequently are *Precious Mirror of Eastern Medicine*, *Farm Management*, *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management*, *Hyang'yak chipsôngbang* (Collection of native prescriptions), and *Bencao gangmu* (Compendium of materia medica), which was written in China (Wön Poyöng 2002, 133).

Yi's encyclopedia took particular inspiration from *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management*. For example, the contents of "T'aejung changni pöp" ("What a woman carrying a child should wear and how she should behave") is also found in the discussion of pregnancy in the section "Imsin changni pöp" 妊娠將理法 ("What a pregnant woman should wear and how she should behave") in *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management* and previously in the section titled "Puin" (Wives) in *Precious Mirror of Eastern Medicine*, with a minor change.<sup>22</sup> In *The Expanded Edition*, it appears as follows.

衣毋太溫 食無太飽 飲無大醉 勿妄服湯藥丸劑 勿妄用鍼灸 勿舉重登高 勿以手取下在高物 勿涉險 勿勞力過傷 勿多睡臥須時時行步 心有大驚子必癩癩 凡猝然大聲必落胎 慎之 臨月不可洗頭 勿登高廁<sup>23</sup>

In "T'aejung changni pöp" in Yi's encyclopedia, it is rendered in Korean:

므릇 아기 가진 아나네 옷을 너무 덥게 말고, 밥을 너무 배부르게 먹지 말고, 술을 너무 취하도록 마시지 말고, 망령되게 약 쓰지 말고, 무거운 것 들고 높은 데 오르며 험한 데 다니지 말고, 힘에 겨웁게 일하여 과히 상하게 말고, 지나치게 성내서 기운을 쓰거나 애태우지 말고, 많이 자거나 오래 누웠지 말고, 때때로 거닐어라. 크게 놀라면 아기가 간질한다. 달 찬 뒤 머리 감거나 발 씻지 말고 높은 뒷간에 오르지 말라.<sup>24</sup>

(English translation)

In general, women who are pregnant should not clothe themselves warmly, should not eat or drink alcohol excessively, should not take medicine thoughtlessly, should not lift heavy things or walk on steep and rough paths, should not work beyond their ability and fall ill, should not become angry or lose their temper, should not sleep or lie down too long, and

<sup>22</sup> Hō Chun, *Tongüi pogam*, vol. 10. DB of Korean medical classics, <https://medicclassics.kr/books/8/volume/18> (accessed August 18, 2016).

<sup>23</sup> Yu Chungim, *Chūngbo Sallim kyōngje* [The expanded edition of farm management], vol. 3 (Suwōn: Nongch'on chinhūngch'ōng 2003), 434.

<sup>24</sup> As for the direct quote of *Kyuhap ch'ōngsō*, I used the version adapted for modern readers in Chōng Yangwan, ed., *Kyuhap ch'ōngsō* (Seoul: Pojinjae, 2007). Please see Yi Pinghögak, "T'aejung changni pöp" [What to wear and how to behave during pregnancy], *ibid.*, 351.

from time to time they should take a stroll. If a pregnant woman is shocked or seriously upset during pregnancy, the child might have an epileptic seizure. When the month during which a pregnant woman will give birth draws near, she should not wash her hair or feet or use a lavatory installed in a high place.

The parallels between these passages show that *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management* was a key source for Yi's encyclopedia and also reveal the intertextual relationships between the texts. The intertextuality—that is, how every text is bound to similar or related texts—are a prominent phenomenon in the East Asian writing tradition, which regularly includes allusions and references to other works. The relationships between a text and other texts can serve as an instrumental means for interpreting the text, as they reveal not only meaningful connections between them but also the originality of a text. The above comparison shows the similarities between the texts, yet also reveals minor omissions by the translator, as Yi did not translate phrases such as “勿以手取下在高物” (Do not take down heavy objects from high shelves) and “凡猝然大聲必落胎 慎之” (A sudden loud noise can lead to spontaneous miscarriage, so please take care).<sup>25</sup> The author's selective translation signifies the endeavor to maintain the quintessence of the transmitted text but also represents an attempt to set a new order of priority.

In assessing the textual context of Yi's encyclopedia, it is therefore important to examine the text in parallel with other encyclopedias, especially *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management* and Sŏ Yugu's *Treatises on Rural Economy*. The former is frequently referenced in Yi's collection, and the latter was produced by male members of Yi's family after the completion of Yi's encyclopedia. These two texts also exhibit interconnectedness with the encyclopedia's text, as they contain topics ranging from theories and methods concerning natural history and agriculture to practical matters, including food and medicine. For example, *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management* describes how to become pregnant and provides tips for increasing fertility, which were also included in Yi's encyclopedia. However, the differences in placement reveal that Yi prioritized information about having a healthy pregnancy.

Table 1 reveals the different ways knowledge is organized in the three interrelated texts. These documents all demonstrate the common importance of prenatal and post-partum care and reveal the different levels of significance attributed to these topics. The first text, *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management*, begins with the conception of the fetus and provides detailed explanations about how to bear a child, emphasizing the patrilineal interest and concern in choosing the right woman for reproduction and preventing and treating male and female infertility. This order is retained in the *Treatises of Rural Economy*, which was published after *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life*. The authors title this section “Kusa” (Seeking an heir), which is followed by the section dealing with how to raise children. Here, the priority is given to the theory, methods, and best timing

<sup>25</sup> It is not clear why the author omitted these parts of the text.

**Table 1.** Comparison of the “Kusa” Chapter in *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management*,<sup>26</sup> the “Ch’ongnang kyöl” Chapter in *The Encyclopedia of Women’s Daily Life*,<sup>27</sup> and the “Kusa” Chapter in *Treatises on Rural Economy* 林園經濟志<sup>28</sup>

	<i>The Expanded Edition of Farm Management</i> 增補山林經濟	<i>The Encyclopedia of Women’s Daily Life</i> 閨閣叢書	<i>Treatises of Rural Economy</i> 林園經濟志
1	求嗣 (Seeking an heir)	태교 (Prenatal education)	求嗣 (Seeking an heir)
2	求嗣總論 (Theories of seeking an heir)	태중장리법 (What a woman carrying a child should wear and how she should behave)	相婦 宜子法 (How to tell whether a wife can bear children)
3	相女法 (How to read a woman’s physiognomy)	음식 금기 (What food is forbidden during pregnancy)	相婦 無子法 (How to tell from her physiognomy if a woman cannot bear a child)
4	治男子無嗣 (Treatment for an infertile husband)	약물 금기 (What medicine is forbidden during pregnancy)	剋無子 (How to overcome infertility)
5	治婦人無子法 (Treatment for an infertile wife)	태동경험 (How to stabilize the fetus)	孕胎 正期 (The best time for pregnancy)
6	轉女爲男法 (How to change the sex of an unborn baby)	별남녀법 (How to distinguish between a boy and a girl)	求嗣 鍼灸 (Acupuncture to help conceive a child)
7	相孕婦氣色法 (Methods to test for pregnancy)	산월전 여위남법 (How to change the sex of an unborn baby)	種子法 (How to bear a son)
8	妊娠禁忌 (Activities forbidden to a pregnant woman)	태살금지 (Activities and places forbidden to a pregnant woman)	占男女法 (How to tell a child’s destiny)
9	飲食禁忌 (Forbidden food)	포의불하의 경험신방 (New methods based on experience to solve various problems during delivery including the retained placenta)	求嗣禁忌 (Activities forbidden to a pregnant woman)
10	藥物禁忌 (Forbidden medicine)	장태법 (How to treat the placenta)	辨男女法 (How to know the sex of an unborn baby)
11	妊娠將理法 (What a pregnant woman should wear and how she should behave)	아기 젖 먹일 때 (How to breastfeed)	求孕禁忌 (Forbidden activities when expecting to become pregnant)
12	間産法 (Delivery)	소아 의복 (How to prepare a newborn’s clothes)	妊娠將理法 (What a pregnant woman should wear and how she should behave)
13	産後調理 (Postnatal care)	양아십요 (Ten tips for infant care)	妊娠禁忌 (Things forbidden when pregnant)
14	藏胞衣法 (How to breastfeed)	소아사주 살성법 (How to ward off a child’s bad luck)	妊娠食忌 (Forbidden food)
15	藏胞衣法 (How to treat the placenta)	소아상가 (How to determine a child’s destiny through physiognomy)	妊娠藥忌 (Forbidden medicine)

for conception; this section also advises how to avoid taking an infertile woman as a wife. Thus, *The Expanded Edition of Farm Management* and *Treatises of Rural Economy* confirm the view that the importance of childbearing begins with the selection of a suitable, fertile woman, which is a fundamental element for carrying

<sup>26</sup> Yu Chungnim, “Kusa” [Seeking heirs], *Ch’ungbo Sallim kyöngje*, vol. 3, 17–54.

<sup>27</sup> Yi Pinghögak, “Ch’ongnang kyöl,” 351–65.

<sup>28</sup> Sō Yugu, “Poyang chi” [Theories of maintaining health], *Imwön kyöngje chi*, vol. 2 (Seoul: Pogyöng munhwasa), 604–14.

on a family line and expanding the human population, while also implying that the medical approach to a woman's body is confined to an expertise in obstetrics focused on the production of an heir (son). In contrast, Yi Pinghögak chooses not to use the same title and tries to shift the perspective on childbirth from preserving the bloodline to bearing a life (Yi Hyesun 2007, 178). Thus, she presents information from pregnancy to post-delivery in chronological order, which helps the reader to grasp the relationship between the various fragments of the text and understand the process of bringing forth a child. In short, the chapter addresses the procedures of pregnancy and childbirth from the perspective of motherhood.

### Interweaving Old and New

Although *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* connects to and interacts with previous texts, it also displays the author's own findings and criteria. This text indicates an unconscious reference to one's own cultural values, experiences, and knowledge as a basis for decisions. Although Yi considered it important to incorporate preexisting records and books, she also believed that her encyclopedia should reflect the needs and concerns of daily life. The encyclopedia also shows her interest in popular wisdom and folk customs, as she was inclined to absorb information from neighbors and rescue it from oblivion.

담 걸려 뽀짝 못하는데 백반 구워 가루 만들어 계란 흰자 위에 섞어 누울 때 먹으면 낫는다.  
적성택에서 전하는 바다. 섬자전에서 베끼다. 섬자전에 볼 것 많다.<sup>29</sup>

(English translation)

When you have a crick in your neck or in your back, prepare *paekpan* (alumen), heat it, and then make it into a powder. After that, mix the powder with egg white and ingest it [as medicine]. [This method] has been passed down in a family in Chöksöng, but I transcribed it from the "Sömja chön" ["Record of Sömja"],<sup>30</sup> which contains a number of useful tips.

The passage implies that oral transmission and hand-copying texts were both integrated into Yi's writing project and that knowledge transfer was not geographically limited.<sup>31</sup> It also confirms the existence of tips and writings inherited in families in diverse regions and the presence of local networks through which women shared the know-how handed down in their families.

On the other hand, to provide accurate descriptions of real-life matters, she took notes on her own experiments and reported what she found through them.

한 번 책을 열면 가히 알아보아 행하게 하고 그 인용한 책이름을 각각 작은 글씨로 모든 조항  
아래 나타내고, 혹시 자기 소견이 있으면 신증이라 썼다.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Yi Pinghögak, "Kyönghömbang" [Methods [learned] from experiences], 435.

<sup>30</sup> The origin and the content of "Record of Sömja" are unknown.

<sup>31</sup> Chöksöng is probably a town near Paju city in Kyönggi Province; Yi Pinghögak lived in what is now the Yongsan area of Seoul.

<sup>32</sup> Yi Pinghögak, "Kyuhap ch'ongsö sö," 20.

(English translation)

I wished to make each item clear and detailed, so that anyone who opens this book will be able to follow the instructions therein and put them into practice. I have included the titles of the books from which I drew my knowledge in small letters, and if I added my own views, I marked them as *sinjŭng* (新徵, new discoveries).

Unlike other encyclopedic writings, Yi's work is not limited to circulating information from other sources, as it also includes her own discoveries. Thus, the author categorized the nature of the information based on its sources and identifies her own methods or criticisms by titling the section "*kyŏnghŏmbang*" (Methods [learned] from experience). In the entry "How to change the sex of an unborn baby," for example, she added her critical comments as an appendix:

대개 아기 될 때 좌우가 각각 나뉜다 하니 여태가 바뀌어 남태 될 리 있으리오만, 의서에 정녕히 기록하였고 시속에 또한 경험한 이 있음에 쓰긴 쓰되 만일 담이 크지 못한 즉 한밤중에 섬뜩하고 놀래어 도리어 태가 흔들리기 쉽고 또 백혜에 죄인이 될까 두렵다.<sup>33</sup>

(English translation)

When the baby is conceived, its sex is determined by its direction, either right or left. Because the medical treatises clearly wrote about this point and there must be a person who found that the method worked in real life, I note it down myself. However, I am afraid that a tenderhearted woman suffers the risk of miscarriage and will blame me for providing incorrect advice.

While the author introduced the method of how to change the sex of an unborn baby, which we now know to be impossible, the text reveals that she took the responsibility to record what she heard but also expressed her opinion that the method could be dangerous and therefore needed careful consideration before being attempted.

The text illustrates her empirical approach, which is significant given the cultural context. In general, Chosŏn writing culture did not promote creativity or originality. Since writing (*mun*) was considered a way of representing the Way, innovation and invention tended to be discouraged. This encyclopedia wisely sought to establish continuity between old materials and the new findings of the author. While references were taken from the pre-existing texts, the author clearly indicated the parts written based on her experiences. Along with "*sinjŭng*" and "*kyŏnghŏmbang*," Yi's discussion included "*sinbang*" (new methods), and "*chapchŏ*" (miscellaneous writings), in which she articulated her own contributions to the encyclopedia. Such efforts appear most frequently in the medical chapter.

정미이월 초일일 낙안서 계사생 계집애가 유혈이 대단하여 그치지 않아 여러가지 약이 무효하여 어쩔 줄 모르더니 동변에 강증과 백토생을 곱게 찢어 세 보시기를 먹고 피가 그쳤다 하

<sup>33</sup> Yi Pinghŏgak, "Nal tal mot toesŏ kyejibae rŭl sanae ro mandŭnŭn pop" [How to change the sex of an unborn baby from female to male], 355.

니 신통하여 이월십오일 그런 걸 보고 경험한 것만 적는다.<sup>34</sup>

(English translation)

On the first day of the second month of the year of *ch'ongmi* (1787), a girl living in Nagan continued to bleed without stopping, so she tried all available medicine. Only after she took three small bowls of medicine made with a child's urine, ginger juice, and *paekt'osaeng* powder did her bleeding stop. This was impressive to me, so I wrote here what I heard and experienced below.

This entry, found in the section “life experience in healing boils,” includes a description that specifically reveals the case, place, specific treatment method, and date when the author recorded this information. In ordering the entries, the new methods discovered by the author usually come after a quotation from classical sources and include methods with experimental elements.

Returning to Pearce's theory, the systematic collector concerned with increasing knowledge likely follows a personal cognitive and conceptual order. Driven by the desire to depict a holistic vision, the collector designs a structure for organizing appropriate information and adheres to that plan. Likewise, *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* reveals that the author did not want to obscure the histories of how and where information was acquired and accumulated, and likewise incorporated the authority of old knowledge; however, the text also reveals a conceptual distance from these model works. Although the references from the previous sources reveal the author's reliance on cultural values and the credibility of the documented knowledge as the basis for her decisions, the self-referenced parts delineate the border between new knowledge and traditional knowledge. In other words, Yi's work contains extracts from existing sources, filtered through her choices of what to include, in which she demonstrates her ability to present material and realize a scholarly vision for the encyclopedia by synthesizing old teachings and her own methods experienced and discovered through experiments.

### **The Vernacular Translation**

The encyclopedia does not lend itself to a chronological treatment; rather, it follows the author's own logic of presenting knowledge. As previously discussed, Yi Pinghōgak assembled the encyclopedia in a new order to focus the readers' attention on particular materials. Although the same entries appear in multiple texts, what distinguishes *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* from other works is how the text organizes and displays them. In addition, the author redesigned the text through her translation into the vernacular to encourage meaningful communication with potential readers.

To validate the existence and authority of the vernacular text, Yi employed textual tactics to assert the importance of her encyclopedia. Although Yi had the

<sup>34</sup> Yi Pinghōgak, “Kyōnghōm chōngyu” [Methods to treat boils based on experience], 380.

agency to choose and select information from old books and her daily life, her work inherently implies the complicated relationship between female authorship and the written authority of men. Stepping out of the female-designated domestic domain, the author explored a world of knowledge that was unbound by barriers of gender, language, and historical period. However, to be read as an authoritative text, this encyclopedia had to undertake complex negotiations between conflicting demands: delivering the facts in a clear and authoritative voice and writing in the vernacular language to better reach the general female populace.

The strategies Yi Pinghögak employed to produce an authoritative text are multifaceted. Her encyclopedia relies on quotations from earlier canonical materials, which encourages readers to accept the information presented as authentic and accurate, while at the same time she provides her commentary on those classical texts, with the titles of her sources written in small letters in the margins. For example, Yi entitles the chapter “Ch’öngnang kyöl,” borrowing the title from Hua Tuo’s *Qingnang shu* or *Qingnang jing* (The blue pocket), which deals with practical tips regarding clinical treatment and first aid.<sup>35</sup> The encyclopedia shows the different ways in which Yi replaces male writers’ works with her experiential knowledge. However, the proximity to Hua Tuo’s medical treatise allows her to faithfully translate the contents from classical Chinese while integrating Korean folk remedies and customs. Thus, the title “Ch’öngnang kyöl” enabled the author to present her encyclopedia as being as authoritative as the canonical work.

At the same time, Yi Pinghögak composed the text in vernacular *han’gül*, seeking a balance between the classical text and the vernacular. Although Yi had a high level of proficiency in Chinese and Korean and she was aware that literary Chinese was the preferred language for formal writing, her work was aimed at translating such knowledge for female readers who could not read literary Chinese into the Korean vernacular so that they could easily understand it. The encyclopedia reflects the author’s desire to enable female readers to acquire necessary knowledge on the one hand; its idiosyncratic use of vernacular Korean subverted the presumed monolingualism dominant in public discourse in Korea on the other.

When referencing the canonical works in literary Chinese, her translation faithfully follows the Chinese originals and admits the value of the canonical text. However, to facilitate memorization and recitation of the content, the translation was presented using a method of sound-based reading (*ümdok*). This method, generally employed by *yangban* woman readers and writers, provided the pronunciation of Chinese characters without the original graphs.<sup>36</sup> Although

<sup>35</sup> Hua Tuo (ca. 140–280), often considered the first physician in Chinese medicine, was a military surgeon during the Han dynasty. This book was ordered burned, and Hua Tuo was put in jail, but his student Wu Fu rewrote the title as *Hua Tuo’s Prescriptions*. A comparison of Madam Yi’s text with Hua Tuo’s book reveals their shared interest in medical issues, especially when we consider that Hua Tuo pursued surgery, pioneering a series of methods involving surgical techniques and anesthetic management, despite popular opposition to the “mutilation” of the human body in East Asia.

<sup>36</sup> After the invention of *han’gül*, three methods of Sino-Korean reading of characters were used

classical scholarship may not have been widespread, there is evidence that elite women, not just Yi Pinghŏgak, were familiar with classical Chinese and acquired knowledge from Chinese works (Haboush 2009, 219). The degree of educational refinement of Chosŏn women depended on the scholarly milieu of their natal homes. Women learned Chinese characters from their mothers or grandmothers through oral dictation (*kusu*) and vernacular transcription (*ũmsa*). However, the direct use of literary Chinese was highly discouraged. For example, Kim Hoyŏnjae and Im Yunjidang acquired literacy in literary Chinese and read Chinese texts but were inclined to actually write in the vernacular (Yi Chongmuk 2002, 71). The vernacular translation of their works, *Hoyŏnjae yugo* (Bequeathed works of Kim Hoyŏnjae) and *Yunjidang yu'go* (Bequeathed works of Im Yujidang), widely circulated among female members of the families, also affirm that a writing culture was sustained in *yangban* families in which elite women read Chinese and Korean, but preferred to use and write in the vernacular.

### Knowledge beyond Gender

Writing an encyclopedia is an attempt to understand and reconstruct the world, rather than simply summarizing and copying portions of existing texts. The process of writing an encyclopedia constructs a relationship between the author and the external world of knowledge. In this light, Yi's encyclopedia should be treated as a monumental work that will stimulate interest in the scholarly activities of late Chosŏn. As a translator and a teacher, Yi took great pains to reconstruct the subject and the objects of knowing by shaping women as readers and presenting women's agency in transmitting their knowledge and skills.

On the other hand, Yi's encyclopedia reveals the ambivalent position of women's writing, as the work preserves and supports gendered ideas based on Confucian norms, but also challenges gender boundaries. Generally speaking, Yi's encyclopedia is grounded in Confucian ideas. The author attributes authority to the *Leiji* 禮記 (Book of rites) and specifically refers to *Naize* 內則 (Regulations for the family),<sup>37</sup> seemingly seeking to construct a harmonious relationship between Confucian discourse and her writing. All five chapters begin with a description of or quotations from classical texts, thereby accepting their principles as guiding her treatment of each category. In particular, her work incorporates exemplary cases of virtuous women in history in the "chaste women" (*yŏllyŏ*) section, which served as moral guidelines for the education of women. Attached to the second chapter, that section subtly supports patriarchal values, presenting models of how a decent woman should behave and what she should avoid doing in order to remain virtuous. In particular, during this period, it was not deemed appropriate for a woman to show her learning openly and take her writings beyond the wall

during the Chosŏn period: sound-based reading (*ũmdok*), adding Korean markers (*kugyŏl*), and literal translation (*pŏnyŏk*). Women's writings adopted sound-based reading or translation rather than adding Korean markers to the original text in Chinese. The preference for *ũmdok* and *pŏnyŏk* resulted in Chinese characters being used less frequently in women's writing (Sŏ Kangsŏn 2012, 406).

<sup>37</sup> Please refer to Yi Pinghŏgak, 23, 149, 271, 351, and 443.

of the inner quarters, so Yi did not intend to have her text circulated outside the home and assumed that readers of her text would only be the female members of her household.<sup>38</sup> Her position is therefore similar to that of Madam Chang (1598–1680), who was an enthusiastic writer but gladly and willingly gave up writing and practicing calligraphy after marriage because she believed they were not suitable for a married woman of a Confucian family (Deuchler 2003, 151). Likewise, although Yi continued to produce writings and even completed the encyclopedia, her motivation and attitude toward writing presumably supported preexisting Confucian norms.

Without a doubt, Yi's encyclopedia was oriented toward women's concerns and a female readership within a Confucian culture. However, Yi's work indirectly asserts that the notion of gendered knowledge can be porous and illusive as well. In a way, *The Encyclopedia of Women's Daily Life* challenges the supposed consistencies of gendered knowledge and reveals the significance of understanding the female world. Although Yi's work contains distinctive female attributes, especially her choice of language (i.e., vernacular Korean) and her awareness of a female readership, the entries and articles working against the stereotyping of women's knowledge are particularly salient. Yi Pinghögak's curiosity and investigation are not confined to traditional issues of concern for women. Rather, the text redefines the criteria of the author's knowledge and interests when dealing with a wide variety of topics by entering a space inhabited by the collective knowledge of household management shared by both men and women. Yi's appropriation of the male-authored texts also reveals that women were not the sole providers of knowledge about cooking and sewing and that men also participated in producing and circulating knowledge concerning women's primary tasks. Besides, the encyclopedia tends to undermine the fixed categories of class as well. The author does not hesitate to include discussions of methods for making topical medications, synthesizing color pigments, or making copperware, even though such techniques were not a highly respected object of study in terms of *yangban* standards.

During the Chosön period, most women were not literate, and their access to the public sphere and outer worlds was limited. Moreover, a woman's inner quarters and the activities related to the domestic sphere engendered female connections with particular areas of expertise, such as cooking and needlework. Gender studies that have focused on evidence of gendered attributes as represented in the texts have informed us of the association of gender with materials and knowledge. However, the evidence suggests that through the very act of writing, Chosön women participated in the public world of knowledge and deserved the right to expand their own practical knowledge. Yi's encyclopedia enables one to appreciate the invisible dimension of Chosön women's intellectual life and practice, while taking into consideration the possibility of the complex subjectivity of women in her position. Molded by men's works that proliferated around her, Yi Pinghögak pursued her interests within the boundaries set by Confucian norms, but does not seem to have developed a specifically female attitude toward what she

<sup>38</sup> Please refer to Yi Pinghögak, 20.

studied, although what she wrote tends to incorporate her own tips and knowledge acquired in everyday life. In this sense, her encyclopedia reveals how the author successfully compromised with the Confucian norm and how she was empowered through the text and successfully assumed her role as a de-gendered subject by not merely transmitting but also transforming the information it contained.

**GLOSSARY**

<i>Bencao gangmu</i>	本草綱目	<i>Sallim kyöngje</i>	山林經濟
<i>Chibong yusöl</i>	芝峰類說	<i>San'ga rak</i>	山家樂
<i>Chönggyu pangmul chi</i>	清閨博物誌	<i>Sö Hosu</i>	徐浩修
<i>Chöngnang kyöl</i>	青囊訣	<i>Sö Myöngüng</i>	徐命膺
<i>ch'ongsö</i>	叢書	<i>Sö Yubon</i>	徐有本
<i>Chöngbo Sallim kyöngje</i>	增補山林經濟	<i>Sö Yugu</i>	徐有渠
<i>Chusa üi</i>	酒食議	<i>Sulsu ryak</i>	術數略
<i>Chwaso sanin chip</i>	左蘇山人集	<i>Taegyo sin'gi</i>	胎教新記
<i>Hö Kyun</i>	許筠	<i>Tomun taejak</i>	屠門大嚼
<i>Hong Mansön</i>	洪萬選	<i>Tongüi pogam</i>	東醫寶鑑
<i>Hoyönjae yugo</i>	浩然齋遺稿	<i>yangban</i>	兩班
<i>Hua Tuo</i>	華佗	<i>Yi Ö'ngang</i>	李彥綱
<i>Hyangyak chipsöngbang</i>	鄉藥集成方	<i>Yi Pinghögak</i>	李憑虛閣
<i>Imwön kyöngje chi</i>	林園經濟志	<i>Yi Sajudang</i>	李師朱堂
<i>Kang Chöngildang</i>	姜靜一堂	<i>Yi Sugwang</i>	李睟光
<i>Kosa sinsö</i>	故事新書	<i>yösöng sirhak</i>	女性實學
<i>Kusa</i>	救嗣	<i>Yu Chungnim</i>	柳重臨
<i>Kyuhap ch'ongsö</i>	閨閣叢書	<i>Yunjidang yu'go</i>	允摯堂遺稿
<i>P'ungsök chönjip</i>	楓石全集	<i>ümdok</i>	音讀
<i>Pinghögak ko</i>	憑虛閣稿	<i>yusö</i>	類書
<i>Pongim ch'ik</i>	縫紉則	<i>Yu Hüi</i>	柳儒
<i>Qingnang shu</i>	青囊書		

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