

Materials in Translation

The Fantasy Garden in East Asian Tradition: A Case Study of a Garden Record in Seo Yugu's *Treatises on Rural Living*

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This paper presents an annotated translation and hermeneutic interpretation of a garden record in Seo Yugu's nineteenth-century Korean encyclopedia *Treatises on Rural Living* (*Imwon gyeongje ji* 林園經濟志). This particular garden record is about a fantasy garden called To-Become Garden (*Jangchwiwon* 將就園). The translation, historical annotations, and hermeneutic interpretation presented in this paper help define the concept of a fantasy garden in East Asian architecture and uncover the Taoist hermitage in the humanistic, social, and environmental context of premodern Korea, at a time when Korea was experiencing a philosophical shift from traditional Neo-Confucianism to the emerging social movement of “practical learning” (Sirhak). This paper demonstrates that Seo's encyclopedic composition of garden theories mixes his cultural perception of Korean mountain landscapes, his life experience of a practical hermitage, and his fantasy of a Taoist paradise. A comparison is drawn between Seo's philosophy of life and Western critical philosophy at the dawn of modernity.

Keywords: Seo Yugu, nineteenth-century Korea, encyclopedia, garden theory, fantasy garden, Sirhak, Taoist hermitage, comparative cultural study

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Introduction

The first question that initiated this paper comes from a comparative study perspective: What is the first Korean garden treatise in history that may be comparable to the first Chinese garden treatise *Yuanye* (1634) and the first Japanese garden treatise *Sakuteiki* (eleventh century)?¹ A possible answer lies in the early-nineteenth-century Korean encyclopedia *Imwon gyeongje ji* 林園經濟志 (Treatises on rural living)² by Seo Yugu 徐有榘 (1764–1845). This encyclopedia is composed of sixteen treatises. In particular, the fourteenth volume, *Treatise of Pleasant Clouds* (*Iun ji* 怡雲志), concentrates on garden theories and the concept of a leisurely life. The different volumes of the *Imwon gyeongje ji* provide practical guidance and knowledge for people's daily life. With the encyclopedia, Seo became an important scholar of the Sirhak (Practical Learning) movement that was popular during the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries of the late Joseon Dynasty (1392–1897).

The historical meaning of the Sirhak movement has been consistently explored by modern scholarship of Korean studies (e.g., Cheon 1979; Jo 2010; and Jeong 2019). In brief, the movement focused on the humanitarian practice of knowledge and advocated the social, political, economic, cultural, and educational reconstruction of Korea towards modernity. Meanwhile, it also endeavored to preserve and rediscover the core values of Korean history, traditional culture, literature, language, and artistic crafts (Seo 2016, 24). The philosophy of Sirhak promoted three principles: *gyeongsechiyong* 經世致用 (experiencing the lived world and applying knowledge for practical benefits in life), *iyong husaeng* 利用厚生 (applying practical knowledge for the health and wellbeing of life), and *silsagusi* 實事求是 (seeking truth from historical facts) (Yi U. 1963). In particular, the principle of *iyonghusaeng* was widely related to the development of the handicraft industry during the late Joseon Dynasty.

Seo Yugu valued the accuracy and rigor of knowledge for a self-sustained life that was closely related to agriculture, medicine, mountain-dwelling, and gardens. He also emphasized practical knowledge that could contribute to the wellbeing of society (Kim 2018). While his encyclopedia provided practical guidance and knowledge for people's independent rural life, Seo was also a

1. An early draft of the paper was presented at the thirteenth Kyujanggak International Symposium on Korean Studies in Seoul, November 2020.

2. Another popular title is *Imwon gyeongje simnyukji* 林園經濟十六志 (Sixteen treatises on rural living).

scholar who had a certain aesthetic taste in architecture and gardens. His *Treatise of Pleasant Clouds*, in particular, presents abundant content regarding a scholar's dilettante life (Shin 2012; Yeom et al. 2011). Throughout his forty-year retirement during the early nineteenth century, Seo conducted broad research and completed his encyclopedia while living a hermetic rural life. The *Treatise of Pleasant Clouds* includes his well-developed garden theories that not only provide practical knowledge of the craft of gardens, but also express his hermetic thoughts and Taoist fantasy, especially through his garden record of the "To-Become Garden" (*Jangchwiwon* 將就園). Although Seo's garden record appears as a traditional documentation of a real garden, the garden is in fact a literary fantasy that also demonstrates a different literary style compared to the objective descriptions in the other volumes of his encyclopedia.

Seo Yugu's original manuscript has not been officially published, and the three existing transcripts of the first edition are separately stored in the Kyujanggak Library at Seoul National University, the Korea University Library, and the Osaka Municipal Library. As an official scholar of the late Joseon Dynasty, Seo wrote his encyclopedia with the aid of the rich collection of the Kyujanggak royal library, situated in the Changdeok Palace in Seoul. The titles and themes of the sixteen treatises of his encyclopedia are as follows: 1. "Principles" (*Bolli* 本利) on farming activities in general; 2. "Irrigation" (*Gwanhyu* 灌畦) on vegetables and herbs; 3. "Horticulture" (*Yewon* 藝畹) on flowers and garden plants; 4. "Late Study" (*Manhak* 晚學) on fruit trees; 5. "Toiling" (*Jeongong* 展功) on silk and fabric production; 6. "Geography" (*Wiseon* 魏鮮) on weather and climate; 7. "Livestock and Fishery" (*Jeoneo* 佃漁) on stock farming; 8. "Tableware" (*Jeongjo* 鼎俎) on food and brewery; 9. "Life Necessities" (*Seomyong* 贍用) on architecture and home appliances; 10. "Eudaimonia" (*Boyang* 保養) on wellbeing and health in the Taoist tradition; 11. "Life Relief" (*Inje* 仁濟) on medicine and therapy; 12. "Ritual and Custom" (*Hyangnye* 鄉禮) on ceremonies and rituals in the country; 13. "Cultivation of Techniques" (*Yuye* 游藝) on useful techniques; 14. "Pleasant Clouds" (*Iun* 怡雲) on gardens and a leisurely life; 15. "Topographical Divination" (*Sangdaek* 相宅) on geomancy; and 16. "Quantum and Measure" (*Yegyu* 倪圭) on economy and business. The sixteen treatises are compiled in a total of 113 fascicles (*gwon* 卷).

The *Treatise of Pleasant Clouds* comprises eight fascicles (*gwon*). The first chapter of the first fascicle focuses on garden theories. The titles of the first three sections in this chapter, including the detailed topic titles of the gardens, garden methods, and garden buildings, are translated as follows:³

3. The translations presented here are based on the classic unpunctuated edition of the *Iun ji*

Fascicle 1:

[Chapter 1] Hermitage (*Hyeongpil* 衡泌) and Layout:

[Section 1] General Theories:

Seven Scenic Views of Mountain Dwelling (*Sangeo* 山居), Four Methods of Living in Mountains, Divining Buildings for Entertaining an Aged Life, Account of Planting Plum-Blossom Trees and Raising Cranes, Little Penglai (*Bongnae* 蓬萊), and On Appropriate Layout.

[Section 2] Gardens (*Wollim* 園林) and Waters:

To-Become Garden (*Jangchwiwon* 將就園), Dragon-Map Villa (*Yongdoseo* 龍圖墅), Turtle-Shell-Texture Garden (*Gumunwon* 龜文園), Method of the Garden as a Fence, Rules for Nine-Path Planting, Big or Small Ponds, Method of Burning Soil for Making a Pool, Method of Keeping Water in a Pool, Method of Artificial Hills (*Gasan* 假山) near Pools, Method of Diverting Springwater, and Method of Expelling Snakes and Creating Mists in Artificial Hills.

[Section 3] Garden Buildings:

Study, Spherical Room, Heated Cabinet (*Ongak* 燭閣), Teahouse, Pharmacy Room, Zither Room, Library, Hall for Printing Books, Guest Reception Lodge, Home School, Archery Pavilion, Pavilion for Appreciating Apricots, Tower for Gazing Sedges, Spring-Partridge Hut and Autumn-Cricket Nest, Livestock-Fishery Clubhouse, Vegetable-Garden Pavilion, Creek Pavilion, Riverside Belvedere, Waterside Pavilion, Bamboo Pavilion, Cypress Pavilion, Thatched Gazebo, Pine Veranda, Scenery-Gathering Gloriette (*Taekseungjeong* 擇勝亭), Snow-Viewing Thatched-House, and Here My Boathouse (*Chayeodaek* 此予宅).

In the first chapter, Seo's first topic in Section 2 on "Gardens and Waters" is his garden record of the so-called "To-Become Garden," which recalls the similarly titled "Record of To-Become Garden" (*Jangchwiwon gi* 將就園記) written by the Chinese Ming-Dynasty scholar Huang Zhouxing 黃周星 (1611–1680). Huang's garden record documents a garden that only exists in literary fantasy; it has never been physically built. The second question that prompted this paper was, why did Seo Yugu include a fantasy garden in his encyclopedia that seemed to be a pragmatic guidance for rural life, mountain-dwelling, and garden hermitage? The other questions to which this paper attempts to draw answers are how the case study of this fantasy garden can lead to a historical understanding of nineteenth-century Korean culture and a comparative cultural understanding of fantasy gardens as well as fantasy architecture in general. This paper thus presents an annotated full translation of Seo's edition of the record of the "To-Become Garden" to encompass a case study of Korean gardens and



Figure 1. The first page of the “To-Become Garden” (*Jangchuiwon* 將就園) record in the transcript of *Iun ji* 怡雲志 (Treatise of pleasant clouds) by Seo Yugu, nineteenth century, Osaka Municipal Library

opens the way for comparative studies of East Asian garden theories. The translation is based on the classic-Korean unpunctuated edition of the *Iun ji* 怡雲志 (Treatise of pleasant clouds) transcript in the Osaka Municipal Library (Figure 1). Classic-Korean characters, Chinese characters, and their Romanized transliterations are provided as needed for the translation and annotations. Based on this annotated translation, the historical meanings of Seo’s garden theories will be hermeneutically drawn from comparative cultural and philosophical perspectives.

An Annotated Translation of a Garden Record

The To-Become Garden

[Part 1]

A garden has no fixed type of place. The only criterion for setting a garden is to select a place with the prettiest landscape. The site [of such a garden] should be primarily surrounded by lofty mountains and steep mountain ranges akin to a castle of lotus flowers (with their multiple layers of petals). The forms of mountains that surround such a castle can include layered mountains, turning

mountains, high mountains enclosing small mountains, small mountains competing with high mountains, and so on. It is unknown how many mountains there are [that surround the garden that I describe].

None of the mountains are named except for the left and right ones. The left one (i.e., the eastern one) is called “Mount To-Be” (*Jangsan* 將山) and the right one (i.e., the western one), “Mount To-Come” (*Chwisn* 就山). Although both are several thousand *ren* high,⁴ Mount To-Be is higher than Mount To-Come, and the latter is comparatively one-third shorter than the former.

The mountains contain valleys on the inside and look precipitous on the outside. They are isolated from the earthly world, without any path for access, except for a small cave located at a southwestern rift on the hillside of Mount To-Come. The size of this cave allows only one person to pass through it. The cave path, overall, moves downwards, meandering, and undulating. After walking in the dark for about several hundred paces, one finally reaches the other end of the cave. Outside the cave, there is a stream, which is also connected to the waters and valleys in the earthly world.

The opening of the cave is small like a well, but at the mountain top, there is a spring, which flies straight down and lightly waves into a waterfall that immediately blocks the cave exit. The waterfall never dries in all seasons, and its shape looks like a suspended curtain. Unless one dashes through the waterfall curtain, one would absolutely not know there is a cave behind. Therefore, few people know the place and have tried to reach it, and this is indeed the boundary of Mount To-Come.⁵

In the mountains, the ground is broad, flat, and fertile and expands to one hundred *li*.⁶ Agricultural fields, villages, temples, and pagodas are all present, like in a painting screen. All kinds of natural products and artifacts in the world can be seen here. The residents are truthful and kind; they do not quarrel or participate in fraudulence. For generations, these people have had no knowledge about scuffles, brawls, or fights. The ground *qi* (air or atmosphere) is harmonious, without thorns, beasts, snakes, rats, mosquitos, poisonous insects, etc. These are the natural features and customs of Mount To-Come.⁷

4. The *ren* 仞 is a height or depth unit equal to about 1.7 meters. “Several thousand *ren*” is a metaphorical expression of immense height.

5. The original term for “boundary” is *hangye* 界限, which literally means “border and limit,” and here it metaphorically means the threshold between the earthly world and the garden paradise.

6. *Li* 里 is a distance unit equal to about 500 meters.

7. In the original manuscript, the term used for “natural features and customs” is *pungto* 風土, which literally means “wind and earth,” and metaphorically, “custom, habit, and geographic environment.” Another related term is *pungjeong* 風情, which literally means “wind and emotion,”

At the corner of each mountain is one flying spring, which plummets into a waterfall, merges into a stream, and flows into a pool. Here, boats and rafts can reach everywhere. At the base of Mount To-Be and Mount To-Come, stream and river courses circulate for over ten *li*, where there are flat and fertile fields, hills and peaks, lakes and slopes, forest and woods, and planes and wetlands, which are winding and undulating. This is the location of my garden.⁸

The garden [here] is divided into eastern and western parts. The eastern part near Mount To-Be is called “To-Be Garden” (*Jangwon* 將園), and the western part by Mount To-Come is called “To-Come Garden” (*Chwiwon* 就園). Combined, they are called “To-Become Garden” (*Jangchwiwon* 將就園). Each garden is encircled by a stream, and one middle stream between the two gardens meanders and flows north to south, and its shape forms a pattern of the *taiji* (ultimate harmony) symbol.⁹ This stream is, in fact, the borderline between the two gardens.

The To-Be Garden gate faces the southeast, and the To-Come Garden gate faces the south. Outside the gates, there is a bridge that has been built for crossing. On the periphery (of each garden), stones are stacked to create an enclosing wall. The middle stream is located outside the To-Be Garden, but partially passes through the To-Come Garden. On the eastern bank of the middle stream, there is another wall that separates the two gardens. To access the stream, there is one water gate and one land gate for the To-Be Garden. Over the stream, there is a pavilion bridge, called “To-Become Bridge,” for communication between the two gardens. The above is the general look of my garden. (From Huang Zhouxing, “The Record of To-Become Garden.”¹⁰)

[Part 2]

The front gate of To-Be Garden faces a brook that spreads into the garden. Here, the water can be seen far and wide. After entering the garden and walking

metaphorically “local conditions and customs,” and aesthetically “atmosphere and taste.” The latter appears as a central aesthetic concept in the earliest known recorded Japanese garden treatise *Sakuteiki* (c. eleventh century). Takei and Keane (2001, 153).

8. In the original manuscript, the term used for “location” is *sojae* 所在, which literally means “where to be,” and metaphorically, “site, place, location, or whereabouts.”

9. The *taiji* 太極 (ultimate harmony) is a concept that indicates the mutual circulation between *yin* 陰 and *yang* 陽 and explains the principle of the creation of all things in the universe.

10. Huang Zhouxing 黃周星, “Jiangjiuyuan ji 將就園記” (The record of to-become gardened) (1670–1674), Huang (ca. 1700). Huang Zhouxing (1611–1680), whose courtesy name is Jiuyan 九煙 and art names are Puan 圃庵 and Jiangjiu Zhuren 將就主人 (To-Become Host), was a late-Ming-early-Qing scholar and well known as a “master of riddles.” The following three sections are also drawn from this source.

on a path of bamboos for about one *li*, one will see three pavilions along the path. (Note 1 [Seo Yugu's annotation, and hereafter in numeric sequence]: The two small pavilions are called "Icy Emerald" [*Hanchwi* 寒翠] and "Fresh Green" [*Byeokseon* 碧鮮], and the big pavilion is called "Evoking and Reciting Poems" [*Joyeong* 造詠]. They are all in expansive bamboo groves, which are quite tall and seem to touch the clouds).

Strolling over a bridge, at the end of the path, is the Luofu Ridge,¹¹ which is surrounded by ridges full of plum blossom trees. (Note 2: The north of the bamboo path is full of ancient plum blossom trees).

Climbing a stone stairway for about one *li*, there is the Uttara Hall. (Note 3: Uttarakuru produces natural clothing and food.¹² The palace is equipped for people to live. The name and meaning of the Uttara Hall are probably given from this [Uttarakuru Kingdom]). The front and back of the hall are full of various well-known flowers, interplanted with phoenix trees and bamboo.

Walking northwest of the hall for about ten paces, there is the Lake of Ultimate Joy. (Note 4: The Old Gentleman Zhuang's [Zhuangzi] chapter "Ultimate Joy" is linked with another chapter, "Autumn Water" which took place over the Hao River.¹³ The name of the lake is thus given). The area of the lake is about twenty *mu*.¹⁴ In the middle of the lake is a long dike, called the "Intoxicated Rainbow" (*Chwihong* 醉虹), which winds towards the northern bank. The dike is made of stacked textural stones.

Along the bank, there are stone balustrades, and in the middle [of the lake] is a huge bridge called the Rainbow-over-Silky-Water Bridge (*Eumnyeongyo* 飲練橋). On the bridge, there is a pavilion called "Sleeping in Autumn" (*Chimchu* 枕秋) (Note 5: The dike is at the middle of the lake, and the bridge is located at the midpoint of the dike. On the bridge, there is a pavilion from which one can gaze at the water landscape. Here, it is like living in a crystal

11. Mount Luofu 羅浮山 is considered to be a sacred mountain in Taoism famous for plum blossoms. The Luofu Ridge 羅浮嶺 in the garden reminds us of Mount Luofu due to its plum blossoms.

12. Uttarakuru (Yudanyue zhou 鬱單越州) is one of the four legendary Buddhist tribal states, a Buddhist paradise that contains four gardens. Huang Zhouxing, the author of the original "Record of To-Become Garden," also wrote a work of prose entitled "Yudanyue song" 鬱單越頌 (Ode of Uttarakuru).

13. The chapter "Ultimate Joy" (*Zhile* 至樂) discusses how to reach ultimate joy through a lively life. In "Autumn Water" (*Qiushui* 秋水), on a bridge over the Hao 濠 River, Zhuangzi and Huizi had their famous debate on the happiness of fish. For a translation of Zhuangzi's scripture *Zhuangzi* (ca. fourth-third centuries BC), see Zhuangzi (1968).

14. The *mu* 畝 is an area unit equal to about 667 square meters.

kettle or the legendary Vaidurya Kingdom.¹⁵ On the bank, there are interplanted peach and willow trees and hibiscus flowers, including plenty of weeping willows whose silk-thread branches flick water waves, like a smoky green brocade).

On the northern bank, there are multifloored pavilions built against the mountain. The eastern and western pavilions face each other. The eastern one is called “Swallowing Dreams” (*Tanmong* 吞夢) (Note 6: This name derives from [Sima] Zhangqing’s “Rhapsody of Sir Vacuous”¹⁶), and the western one is called “Forgetting the Heavens [and Earth]” (Note 7: This name derives from [Tao] Yuanming’s poetical chant, “After several cups of wine, I suddenly forget the heavens [and earth]”¹⁷). The lofty multifloored pavilions with flying roof ridges seem connected to the cosmos. The left pavilion looks red and the right one appears white to symbolize the meaning of *yin* and *yang*.

The two multifloored pavilions are about ten *zhang* apart.¹⁸ Between the towers is an open terrace called Rainbow Platform (Note 8: The name “Rainbow” originates before the age of Longhan.¹⁹ An alternative name for the building is “Cloudless” [*Muun* 無雲]). Below the platform is a stacked stone doorway, shaped like the outer wall of the city gate. The front surface of the dike is oriented towards the south to receive the southern breeze. (Note 9: The platform is built against the mountain. Its floor is flat like a square sitting mat of ten *zhang* on each side. South of the platform is a short wall similar to a parapet. North of the platform is a house of three bays, which is in the interlocked heavy shade of two huge sophora trees, one on each side of the house. Ancient vines encircle the trees. Under the platform is a stone-laid doorway, which appears open like a city gate with a front enclosure. The doorway is a dozen paces wide and deep, facing the dike. When the midsummer is hot and humid, one can enjoy cool air in the doorway during the daytime and drink wine with the moon on the platform by night, completely forgetting the

15. Vaidurya (玻璃, 吠琉璃; glazed ware) is one of the so-called “seven Buddhist treasures.” Vaidurya Kingdom (玻黎國) refers to a legendary country famous for glazed statues.

16. An annotated translation “Rhapsody of Sir Vacuous” of Sima Zhangqing’s 司馬長卿 *Zixufu* 子虛賦 appears in Knechtges (1987).

17. The verse “After several cups of wine, I suddenly forget the heavens [and earth]” (重觴忽忘天) is from Tao Yuanming’s 陶淵明 (365–427) poem “Lianyu duyin” 連雨獨飲 (Drinking wine in solitude in continuous rain). Tao Yuanming, a fourth-century Taoist hermit, wrote the famous “Record of the Peach Blossom Stream” (桃花源記), which created the paradigm of Taoist earthly paradise and labyrinth. For a comparative philosophical analysis of Tao Yuanming’s paradise and the Greek labyrinth, see Zou (2017, 188–191).

18. The *zhang* 丈 is a distance unit equal to about 3.3 meters.

19. Longhan 龍漢 is the Taoist god Holy Tianzun’s reign title.

scorching and sultry heat of midsummer).

The lake is encircled by a covered gallery, intermitted by fences next to the water. Beyond the gallery and fences are peach, willow, and hibiscus trees along both banks of the dike, with the largest number of plants being weeping willows.

The shape of the lake is similar to a wall mirror, divided by the dike into eastern and western parts. The western side of the lake is wider than the eastern side. At the middle of the eastern side is an island that extends out [of the lake] like a turtle. On the island, there is a tiny octagonal pavilion, called “Spot” (Note 10: This pavilion is thus named as it looks like a spot in the ultimate emptiness [*tæheo* 太虛] that is Tao). At the middle of the western side, there is a long islet shaped like a fish whose head points eastward. A house sits on the islet, and the whole view looks like a multifloored-pavilion boat, called “The Spiral Shell on a Tray” (Note 11: The original term *li* [of a “spiral shell”] has a similar meaning as the term *luo*.²⁰ Liu Yuxi’s “Poem on Mount Jun” states: “A green-bluish shell on a white silver tray.”²¹ The meaning of the name of the island was probably taken from this poem).

The balustrades of the gallery are each flanked by bamboo blinds. The shore of the islet is full of peach, willow, and hibiscus trees, which face the dike. However, the middle of the rippling lake cannot be reached without a boat. As for the types of water chestnut, lotus, fish, and birds, nothing looks artificial. They all naturally grow and therefore do not compel the host to decorate.

The open ground behind the towers [mentioned above] is fully planted with well-known and exotic species of flowers. Here is the Village of One Hundred Flowers.²² (Note 12: Between and nearby the towers, flowers bloom in thousands of colors through all seasons. Among the flowers are scattered pavilions named after nearby flowers. The most famous flower species include crabapple blossom, peony, litchi, hibiscus, etc.). In each tower, there is one pretty lady who leads four child maidservants to burn incense, serve tea, and prepare for visitors’ angling. The kitchen, shower, and storage rooms [of the towers] are all behind the towers. Near the shower room, there bubbles a warm spring.

In the garden, there is a library, winery, herb garden, vegetable garden, orchard, fishery, menagerie, and pasture. They are scattered all over the place,

20. *Li* 蠡 and *luo* 螺.

21. The verse “It is like a green-bluish shell on a white silver tray” (白銀盤裏一青螺) is from Liu Yuxi’s 劉禹錫 poem “Junshan shi” 君山詩 (Poem on Mount Jun). Liu Yuxi (772–842), whose courtesy name is Mengde 夢得, is a Tang-Dynasty poet and philosopher. He wrote the famous rhythmic prose “Inscribed Maxim for a Rustic House” (陋室銘) (824–826).

22. “One hundred flowers” is a metaphorical expression of numerous types of flowers.

mostly near the mountains and streams. There are two studies south of the Luofu Ridge: the left one is called “To-Come to Sun” (*Ilchwi* 日就), and the right one, “To-Be at Moon” (*Woljang* 月將). The studies are where [the garden owner’s] disciples read books with comments.

North of the [Luofu] Ridge is the Temple of Flower Goddesses, dedicated to deities of one hundred flowers, accompanied by statues of gifted scholars and pretty ladies of history. (Note 13: In the middle of the temple, wood tablets represent the deities of one hundred flowers, including Donghuang and Fengyi.²³ On both sides [of the temple] are statues of gifted scholars and pretty ladies, such as Sima Zhangqing, Zhuo Wenjun, Qin Jia, and Xu Shu.²⁴ On the annual birthday festival of one hundred flowers, pretty ladies set up a sacrifice of fruits and wine for paying homage to these deities, and new poems are chanted as an incentive).

When guests come [to the temple] for a tour and banquet, within the garden, they can reach everywhere by boat or foot, except for the two towers north of the lake, which are accessible only through the dike and bridge. The towers are the residence of pretty ladies [of the family] and are inaccessible to guests. The “Spiral Shell” pavilion on the western side of the lake is, on the other hand, alternatively open for pretty ladies or guests. If in search of coolness in the summer, the pavilion is mostly used by pretty ladies for banquets and sleep.

Following the lakeshore westward and winding over ten times through the gallery, one will encounter one land gate and one water gate. Passing through the gates and crossing over a bridge, here is the To-Come Garden.

[Part 3]

The front gate of the To-Come Garden faces a stream, which diffuses into the garden. The number of mountains in the garden is greater than the number of bodies of water. The varied flowers in the To-Come Garden also imitate the To-Be Garden, with pine trees and bamboo having the greatest amount of vegetation. After entering the gate, one will see a path that transits to over one hundred stone stairsteps.

At the end of the stone stairway is the Valley of Ten Thousand Pines (Note 14: The length of the valley is about two *li*; it is full of old pine trees that soar

23. Donghuang 東皇 is a heavenly divinity and Fengyi 封姨 is a wind goddess. Donghuang first appears in poet Qu Yuan’s 屈原 (343–278 BC) poem “Jiu ge” 九歌 (Nine Songs).

24. Sima Zhangqing 司馬長卿, Zhuo Wenjun 卓文君, Qin Jia 秦嘉, and Xu Shu 徐淑. Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 (179–118 BC), whose courtesy name is Zhangqing 長卿, was a rhapsody writer of the Western-Han Dynasty, and Zhuo Wenjun was his wife.

into the sky, all of which look like old dragons or angry horned dragons with shiny scales and claws. In the valley, there are the Pavilion of Forever Open, Nunnery of Self-Esteem, and Taoist Monastery of Evergreen²⁵).

Walking among pine trees for about one *li* and crossing a bridge over a stream, one will see the Hall of Lady Huaxu. (Note 15: The legendary Xuanhuang dreamed of touring [*mongyu* 夢遊] Lady Huaxu's celestial kingdom.²⁶ Twenty-eight years after this dream, his kingdom finally became prosperous and peaceful. This was only a dream, but now the dream has come true [in the To-Become Garden]. I, therefore, compose a poetic couplet for this building: "The wonderland of the sacred birds [*Jangni* 長離] and Taoist mountains [*Gwangseung* 廣乘]; The people of the Wuhuai and Getian happy kingdoms"²⁷).

In front of the Hall of Lady Huaxu, there is a large pool on the edge of which varied famous flowers are planted, and that is interplanted with sycamore trees and bamboo. Such an arrangement looks similar to the To-Be Garden. To the north of the hall, there are many mountains, with layers after layers of hillocks and ridges. The cliffs and crags stand straight up, similar to a city of one hundred city walls. A creek passes through the valley into a deep stream with nine big and small windings.

When the view at a winding place of the stream looks remote and pretty,²⁸ a pavilion or lodge is erected on that spot. There are six pavilions and four lodges built [here]. (Note 16: The pavilions and lodges are untitled; hence, the intriguing lack of names reinforces a sense of meandering. Each of these buildings is called according to the sequential number of the stream windings).

At the final eighteenth winding of the stream, when the mountain propensity is almost gone,²⁹ there suddenly emerges two mountain peaks, each of which is

25. In the name Hanjidowon 寒知道院 (Evergreen Taoist Monastery), the term "*dowon*" 道院 indicates a temple where ascetics reside.

26. Xuanhuang 軒黃, namely Huangdi 黃帝, is the legendary ancestor of the ancient Huaxia tribe. Lady Huaxu 華胥 is the mother of the legendary Fuxi 伏羲 in Chinese mythology. Because of Xuanhuang's dream of Huaxu's celestial kingdom, the name Huaxu became a metaphor of the dreamed world in general.

27. Wuhuai 無懷 and Getian 葛天 are two legendary ancient kingdoms.

28. In the original manuscript, the original phrase for "the view at a winding place...looks remote and pretty" is "曲折幽勝," which literally means "meandering towards the remote and pretty view." In the earliest known Chinese garden treatise *Yuanye* (1634), by Ji Cheng 計成 (1582–1642), there are similar statements such as "meandering contains emotion" (曲折有情) and "meandering in accordance with [topographic] propensity" (依勢而曲). See Ji (1999, 62, 91).

29. In the original manuscript, the original term for "mountain propensity" is "*shanshi*" 山勢, which literally means "mountain propensity, mountain momentum, mountain dynamic, mountain posture, or mountain contour." For a comparative cultural and philosophical analysis of the concept of shi 勢 (propensity), see Jullien (1999, 98–102).

one thousand *xun* high.³⁰ The eastern peak is called “To-Come to Sun” (*Chwiiil* 就日), and the western, “Clouds To-Be” (*Unjang* 雲將). On the southern side of each peak, a temple is built, and behind each temple there is a multifloored pavilion. The eastern temple is dedicated to the chivalrous deity Yiyong Guan Fuzi,³¹ accompanied by offerings to multiple patriotic heroes in history (Note 17: such as the groups of Zhang [Xun], Xu [Yuan], Wen [Tianxiang], Xie [Fangde], etc.³²). The ritual activity in this temple is led by eminent Buddhist monks. The western temple is dedicated to the Taoist Master Lü Chunyang,³³ accompanied by famous Taoist scholars and hermits in history (Note 18: such as the groups of Zhang Zifang, Tao Yuanming, Li Qinglian, [Li] Changyuan, etc.³⁴). The ritual activity in this temple is led by Taoist alchemists.

The two mountain peaks are about several *zhang* apart, overlooking a precipitous deep vale whose depth may reach several thousand *ren*. Near the western peak, there is an ancient vine whose age is hard to speculate. Two robust tree trunks extend horizontally into the air and are connected to the eastern peak. The trunks are as huge as temple columns. Between the two trunks are laid horizontal wood planks for crossing. What a naturally born bridge! At the top of the western peak, there is a platform, called “Holding Arms with Immortals” (Note 19: also called “Being Intimate with Immortals”). On the platform, a five-character stone tablet is erected that states, “Wave to thank my contemporaries.”³⁵

On the mountainside of the eastern peak, there is a cave. On each side [of the cave], at the entrance of the cave, there is an alchemic room built against the

30. *Xun* 尋 is a distance or height unit that equals eight *chi* 尺 or about 2.4 meters.

31. Guan Yu 關羽 (160–220), whose courtesy name is Yunchang 雲長, divine titles are Wusheng 武聖 and Yiyong 義勇, and honorific title is Guan Fuzhi 關夫子, was a general of the Three Kingdoms period.

32. Zhang Xun 張巡 (Tang Dynasty), Xu Yuan 許遠 (Tang Dynasty), Wen Tianxiang 文天祥 (Southern-Song Dynasty), and Xie Fangde 謝枋得 (Southern-Song Dynasty) were patriotic heroes in the history of Imperial China.

33. Lü Yan 呂岩 (796–1016), whose courtesy name is Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓, Taoist name is Chunyang-zi 純陽子, and honorific title is Lü Zu 呂祖 (Lü Master), was a Tang-Dynasty Taoist master.

34. Zhang Zifang 張子房 (Zhang Liang 張良, Western Han Dynasty), Tao Yuanming 陶淵明 (Eastern Jin Dynasty), Li Qinglian 李青蓮 (Li Bai 李白, Tang Dynasty), and Li Changyuan 李長源 (Li Bi 李泌, Tang Dynasty). Li Bai 李白 (701–762), whose courtesy name is Tai Bai 太白, art name is Qinglian Jushi 青蓮居士 (Green-Lotus Taoist), and honorary title is “Immortal of Poetry,” was a Tang-Dynasty poet. His many poems were created in ebriety. This group of scholars is well known for their relationship with Taoist tradition and hermitage in the history of Imperial China.

35. The verse “Wave to thank my contemporaries” (揮手謝時人) is from Cao Xun’s 曹勳 (Song Dynasty) poem “Shengtian xing” 昇天行 (Ascending to Heavens).

crag. The landscape [of this room] is so verdant and gloomy that few people have reached that point. A seven-character poetic chant describes this place well: “Cave clouds deeply lock green widows’ chill.”³⁶

At the northern foot of the mountain is a deep pond, called “Peach Blossom Pond,” which expands to a size of two *mu*. The water here is crystal clear. The two mountain peaks [I have described] are full of peach blossoms. Nearby the pond, there is a wide and flat stone slope that can seat one thousand persons. Sitting on the slope and observing the western peak, one can see across the pond a waterfall plunging straight down and its roaring sounds are like galloping thunder.

Near the slope is an angling terrace, west of which is a stone bridge. The bridge strides through the deep vale and reaches the side of the western peak. Looking up from the stone bridge obliquely towards the [overhead] vine bridge, the distance seems to be between the sky and earth.

In the gaps of the hills and ridges of the garden, there are groves of cinnamon, banyan, maple, and cypress, all of which face the Valley of Ten Thousand Pines. In the middle of the groves there sit one Buddhist retreat site³⁷ and one Buddhist friary for alchemists and monks to tour as well as rest at. These cannot be described in detail here.

Beside the temple of the western peak, there is a hot spring. Here, a bathing room is built, and it is convenient for body cleansing. Nearby, there are also a few alchemic rooms, the so-called heated lodges,³⁸ the air in which is warm rather than cold. Even in midwinter, the interior feels like spring because of warm steam emanating from the hot spring. Additional areas include places such as an herb garden and a vegetable garden, similar as in the To-Be Garden.

When guests come to visit here, they can tour [the different] places, climb the mountains, gaze afar into the distance, and view the scenic landscapes as they wish. The gathering place [here] is mostly in the Hall of Lady Huaxu. Pretty ladies also frequently participate [in the activities here].

East of the hall, along the mountain, there is a winding path, with a gallery built against the stone cliffs. Meandering through the gallery for dozens of turns, one reaches the To-Become Bridge. East of the bridge, there is an

36. The verse “Cave clouds deeply lock green windows’ chill” (洞雲深鎖碧窗寒) is from Gao Pian’s 高駢 (Tang Dynasty) poem “Buxu xi” 步虛詞 (Chant in a Light Walk).

37. In the original manuscript, the original term for “Buddhist retreat” is *nanya* 蘭若, an abbreviation of *aranya* 阿蘭若, which is the transliteration of the Sanskrit *āranyaka*. The term signifies a quiet disciplining space for a monk.

38. In the original manuscript, the original term for “heated lodge” is *ukguan* 燠館, which is a room for the body to receive warm energy and is similar to today’s steam baths.

enclosing wall with one land gate and one water gate. Once one passes through the gates, one reaches the To-Be Garden. The opening of each gate follows its own schedule. An exit from the To-Be Garden does not necessarily mean an immediate entrance to the To-Come Garden.

[Part 4]

The To-Be Garden possesses much water, and the To-Come Garden encloses many mountains. Although water is all over the place in the To-Be Garden, in the areas from the Luofu Ridge to the two towers and open terrace, mountains are still everywhere. Although mountains seem to occupy the To-Come Garden, a creek enters from the south into the garden, and merges into the pool at the Hall of Lady Huaxu, whose water flows north into the mountain stream of the eighteen-winding vale. The vale stream finally runs into the Peach Blossom Pond, whose water flows back to the north into another creek, and water is thus everywhere.

Therefore, the To-Be Garden looks expansive, and the To-Come Garden appears deep. The former looks scattered, and the latter appears dense; the former feels characteristic and delightful and the latter, age-old and solemn; the former gives a sense of wealth and aristocracy and the latter, elegance and leisure.

Among the four seasons, the To-Be Garden is suitable for summer, and the To-Come Garden is appropriate for winter. However, the To-Be Garden includes several *mu* of plum blossom trees, and the twin towers face south for warm sunlight while overlooking the lake and observing snow; hence, this garden is not so unsuitable for winter. As for the To-Come Garden, it contains the remote depth of mountain crags and valleys and the dense green of bamboo groves to reduce the heat of June; hence, this garden is not so inappropriate for summer. As for the pretty days of spring and autumn, both gardens are such a good fit.

East of the To-Be Garden is Mount To-Be, where there are one hundred watercourses of pearl-like springs, which run and fall nonstop in all seasons. West of the To-Come Garden is Mount To-Come, at the foot of which there are flat and expansive fields in ten thousand *qing*,³⁹ full of eternal sunset light. These are the main differences regarding the landscapes of the two gardens.

Comparing the two gardens, they both contend for splendor and elegance and match each other in generating beauty. Climbing the towers and terrace in the To-Be Garden and looking towards the twin peaks in the To-Come Garden,

39. *Qing* 頃 is an area unit equal to 100 *mu* or 6.7 hectares. "Ten thousand *qing*" is a metaphorical expression of an expansive area.

one can see the two peaks standing in the mist like two gate towers in the clouds, surrounded by the expansive forest of lush pine trees. This matches the so-called auspicious *qi* of the Five Mausoleums.⁴⁰

Climbing the mountain peaks of the To-Come Garden and looking eastwards at the lofty terrace and magnificent building towers in the To-Be Garden, one will see the buildings appearing like the palaces of Feilian and Guiguan.⁴¹ Gazing afar the brilliant lake landscape, one will recall the celestial islands of Yingzhou and Fangzhang.⁴² Do these two beautiful gardens not correspond to each other as a unity but still maintain their respective characteristics?

Hermeneutic Interpretation of the Garden Record

In the translated garden record we present, Part 1 outlines the garden site and the garden layout; Part 2 portrays the eastern To-Be Garden as a water-landscape garden; Part 3 depicts the western To-Come Garden as a mountain-landscape garden; and Part 4 compares and unites the two gardens through a viewing from one garden to another at a distance. In Part 4, rather than emphasizing the existence of a single united garden, the record highlights the poetical distance of garden imagination shuttling between the two distinctive but connected gardens and between the historical and celestial paradises. As Paul Ricoeur stated with regards to the methodology of hermeneutic historical analysis, “It is this openness, this clearing, this *lumen naturale*, that the naïve imagination projects in the Elysian Fields...[which] represents the *openness* prior to history and make possible all dialogue in time” (Ricoeur 1965, 54). Our translation annotations of the garden record from Seo Yugu’s *Treatise of Pleasant Clouds* (*Iun ji*) include historical allusions to the landscape literature and gardens; the symbolisms of cultural, religious, and philosophical terms; and garden concepts that can connect East Asian garden theories from a comparative study perspective, such as “meandering” (*gokjeol* 曲折), “mountain propensity” (*sanse* 山勢), “cultural atmosphere” (*pungto* 風土), and Taoist paradise. Seo’s edition of the “To-Become Garden” record and his own annotations in the record demonstrate that his encyclopedic composition of garden theories in the *Treatise of Pleasant Clouds* mixes his cultural perception of Korean mountain landscapes, his life experience

40. The “Five Mausoleums” (Wuling 五陵) indicate the five imperial mausoleums near the Han-Dynasty capital Chang’an.

41. Feilian 蜚廉 and Guiguan 桂觀 were palaces in the Han-Dynasty capital Chang’an.

42. Yingzhou 瀛洲 and Fangzhang 方丈 are Taoist celestial islands.

of a practical hermitage, and his fantasy of a Taoist paradise. The overall design layout of the To-Become Garden implies the Neo-Confucianist *taiji* (*taegeuk* 太極) cosmic diagram. The cosmic link in Seo's garden theories is reinforced by his other two garden cases, which immediately follow the To-Become Garden, namely the Dragon-Map Villa (*Yongdoseo* 龍圖墅) and the Turtle-Shell-Texture Garden (*Gumunwon* 龜文園). The designs of these two gardens are based on the Taoist diagrams of cosmic elements (*hado* 河圖) and the magic square (*nakseo* 洛書).

The To-Become Garden brings to light the history of fantasy gardens in the East Asian tradition. Except for the surrealism of the 1920s to 1930s, the theory of fantasy architecture has seldom been explored in modern architectural history. Trapped by functionalist manifestoes, modern cities mass-produce buildings that can easily satisfy pragmatic needs but are unable to evoke poetic emotion and preserve cultural identities, a predicament of nihilism prophesied by Nietzsche at the dawn of modernity (Nietzsche 1968, 8, 19, 22). The modern architect Le Corbusier was fully aware that his proposed ideal model of a modern city, the "Voisin" Scheme for Paris (1925), had already been criticized as a "nihilism" that did not satisfy the human need for "fantasy and grace." His City of Tomorrow is based on a surgical demolishing-and-rebuilding process, which he called "freedom through order" (Le Corbusier 1987, 17, 211, 274, 282). His claimed spatial freedom in "a city made for speed" is dominated by machinery, but as Nietzsche timely meditated, "the individual, faced with this tremendous machinery, loses courage and submits" (Nietzsche 1968, 23).

The predicament of modern architecture draws theoretical attention to historical moments when human poetical emotion, imagination, and bodily sensation are configured into the built symbolism of space and time, of which Renaissance fantasy architecture and Eastern fantasy gardens may find their historical coincidence. Besides its cross-cultural philosophical meanings, such as the Taoist sage Zhuangzi's dream of butterflies⁴³ or Nietzsche's "Dionysian intoxication" (Nietzsche 1968, 420), the concept of "fantasy" here specifies the architectural situation in which the human being releases emotion and unfolds imagination through a seemingly actual building project that is composed in detail in the literature, typically in the literary genre of the "garden record" (*wongi* 園記) in East Asian traditions, but has never been built in reality and remains as an enlightening fantasy architectural work. The Western premodern examples as such are Giulio Camillo's *Theater of Memory* (1550), the water

43. The butterfly dream is the chapter "On the Equality of Things" (*Qiwu lun* 齊物論) of Zhuangzi.

labyrinth in Francesco Colonna's romance novel *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Poliphilo's Strife of Love in a Dream) (1499), and the eighteenth-century French visionary architect Jean-Jacques Lequeu's fictional buildings, when the cross-cultural exchanges of architectural fantasy between East and West began to materialize through French *folie* gardens and the Jesuit architectural encounter with Eastern gardens.⁴⁴ The narrative articulation of architectural intentions in fantasy architecture or gardens "conveys the presence...of a sensuous, emotionally charged atmosphere as the primary ground of architectural meaning, eventually disclosing poetic images, symbols, and icons to propitiate a good and healthy life" (Pérez-Gómez 2016, 1:92).

The To-Become Garden is a unique case of fantasy gardens in the East Asian tradition because of its double documentation in both Chinese and Korean premodern literature. The garden had been literarily composed by the Chinese scholar Huang Zhouxing in his "Record of To-Become Garden" at a time when the dream and fantasy theory became popular in Chinese literature and gardens during the Ming-Qing Dynasties (ca. sixteenth–nineteenth centuries).⁴⁵ This theoretical trend had also been witnessed by Seo's encyclopedia when he noted Zhuangzi's philosophy, the Taoist "crystal kettle," Tao Yuanming's hermitage, and Xuanhuang's dream of touring the celestial Huaxu Kingdom. A sixteenth-century Korean poem well characterizes Zhuangzi's philosophy:

Give me wings, I will reach the high heavens,
With scales, I can dive into a deep pool.
How silly, you dreamer within a dream,
Not knowing your body is in a melting furnace.⁴⁶

The poem above highlights the Taoist principles of imagination, happiness of

44. For a case study of Jesuit architecture in China, see Zou (2011).

45. For an analysis of Huang Zhouxing's "Record of To-Become Garden" within the Ming-Dynasty fantasy garden aesthetics, see Zou (2018). Compared with Huang's garden record which endeavors to make the fictional garden look real, in the Ming-Dynasty garden theories, there is a concept of "*jingyou*" 鏡游 (strolling in a mirror) which describes the illusory paradisiac experience in a real garden. See Ji Cheng (1999, 213). For a literary-history study of Chinese fantasy gardens of the Ming-Qing dynasties, see Li (2012, 308–315), which includes an introduction and analysis of the "To-Become Garden" (Jiangjiuyuan) (translated as "Approximate Garden" in the article). For a historical analysis of Huang Zhouxing's personal life and his literary works of "utopian fantasy," including the "Record of To-Become Garden," see Widmer (2006, 259–262). The article includes three map illustrations of the To-Become Garden, which are from Huang Zhouxing's posthumous anthology *Xiaoweitang biejì* 夏爲堂別集 (1688).

46. Great Master Chunggwon (fl. 1590), "Upon Reading Chuang Tzu [Zhuangzi]," in Lee (1981, 160).

life, dreaming, and alchemy. Comparing Seo's version of the garden record with Huang's, we can see that the former does not include much of the beginning and ending portions of the latter's version of the garden record. At the beginning of his version, Huang expresses his concern that he has not yet had his own garden; at the end, he explains that the name of the garden "to become" (*jangchwi* 將就) combines the two component garden names "to be" (*jang* 將) and "to come" (*chwi* 就). According to Huang, "to be" expresses what a fleeting intention wishes to reach (*uijisoji* 意之所至); "to come" articulates the profound situation of homecoming for the peace of the heart (*suuian* 隨遇而安); and "to become" indicates the cosmic dwelling between the sky and the earth, the sun and the moon, and the sunlight and the clouds (*janggochwijeo* 將高就低).⁴⁷ In a prologue and epilogue by Huang's scholar friend Zhang Chao for the "Record of To-Become Garden," Zhang describes the garden as a "literary game" that coincides with the heavenly paradise.⁴⁸ In Huang's postscript for his own garden record, he calls the garden the "fantasy scenic-view" (*hwangyeong* 幻景) and "spectacular view,"⁴⁹ which is never physically built but exists as a real garden in the mind that can be comparable with the beauty of the immortal world.

By excluding the fantasy context of Huang's garden record, Seo Yugu transformed the originally illusionary garden into a seemingly actual garden, with named mountains and water landscapes. This significant change brought

47. Huang (ca. 1700). The term "*jiangjiu*" 將就 literally means "to reach and to arrive at the destination;" it can also mean "to compromise on a less perfect situation," indicating that although the destination has not been completely reached, "being almost there" can be satisfying. Huang Zhouxing uses this term for a double meaning that although his fantasy garden is humbly fictional, it is as beautiful and poetically evocative as a real garden; it meanwhile expresses a strong life will to poetical becoming, similar to Zhuangzi's dream of butterflies, through garden literature. From his separation of the term *jiangjiu* into two terms of "*jiang*" 將 (to be) and "*jiu*" 就 (to come) for naming the two componential gardens, it is clear the combined term *jiangjiu* expresses more the life force of "to become." In Wai-yee Li's article on Ming-Qing fantasy gardens, the *jiang* and *jiu* are respectively translated as "approaching" and "accommodating," and the *jiangjiu* as "approximating." She translates the phrase "*jiang gao jiu di* 將高就低" as "approaching the high and accommodating the low" and interprets it as Huang's expression of "self-deprecation and grandiosity." See Li (2012, 310–311). In an article on Huang Zhouxing's literary works of "utopian fantasy," Ellen Widmer analyzes that "the name of *jiangjiu yuan*, which on one level implies a makeshift arrangement, can also be read to mean 'the garden to which I will go.' In the second reading lies a hint that Huang's invented garden was to be his residence after death." See Widmer (2006, 264–265).

48. Zhang Chao 張潮 (Qing Dynasty), "*Jiangjiuyuan xiaoyin*" 將就園記小引 (Prologue) and "ba" 跋 (Epilogue), in Huang (ca. 1700).

49. Huang Zhouxing, "*Xianji jilue*" 仙乩紀略 (Summary on Divining with Immortals), in Huang (ca. 1700). Compared with Huang's concept of "fantasy scenic-view" (*hwangyeong* 幻景), the garden treatise *Yuanye* states that "meandering...creates the fantasy place (*hwangyeong* 幻境)." See Ji (1999, 73).



Figure 2. Jeong Seon, *Mountain of Dancing Cranes*, 1746, private collection. In this eighteenth-century Korean “true view” landscape painting, the two sublime mountain peaks rising above the clouds in the distance remind us of the spectacular Mount To-Become and Mount To-Come in the To-Become Garden, and the humble buildings embody a hermetic mountain dwelling. The painting perfectly depicts the spatial distance of poetical “becoming” through “fancying the high and dwelling the low” (*jang-gochwijeo* 將高就低) in the Record of To-Become Garden.

by Seo echoes the philosophical shift in the late Joseon Dynasty of Korea from metaphysical Neo-Confucianism to an empirical Confucianism called Sirhak (“practical learning”), which was deeply concerned with human society and daily life. The Sirhak movement played an important role in the rise of the “true view” (*jingyeong* 真景) landscape paintings during the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries. The Sirhak scholars made great efforts to explore new ideas of Korean history, language, literature, and geography, and in particular a new aesthetic perception of geography and mountain landscapes, the so-called “true view,” was developed.⁵⁰ The people of the late Joseon period tended to examine landscapes in a close-to-the-real way, and this aesthetic desire motivated them to travel through various mountains and landscapes. “True view” landscape paintings depict the painter’s spiritual perception (fancy) of true nature based on his bodily experience of real mountains. The “true view” of a mountain is the revealed truth of living with the mountain, the moment of “really seeing the mountain” (Ch’oe 2005, 27, 29, 33). Rather than a realistic imitation, the “true view” of mountains can be interpreted

as Heidegger’s “insight” in which the spectator “attunes” himself to the true view of mountains and “as the mortal, looks out toward the divine.”⁵¹ In this sense, Seo’s practical approach to garden theories lies in the very detail that he adopted the fictional record of the To-Become Garden as a practicable model

50. Yi S. (2015, 11–13). For an analysis of how the Sirhak movement and “true view” landscape paintings are related to the emergence of Korean modern architecture, see Seo (2016, 117).

51. Martin Heidegger, “The Turning,” quoted in Levin (1988, 365).

of garden-living in mountain landscapes, as depicted in “true-view” landscape paintings (Figure 2).

Seo’s garden theory of mountain-dwelling is well embodied by the To-Become Garden. The title of his garden treatise, “Pleasant Clouds,” alludes to the Taoist eremitism and Zen Buddhist meditative enlightenment of the hermit’s life, as expressed by his citations of the Zen master painter Ni Zan’s garden buildings⁵² and the three Taoist celestial islands. The To-Become Garden thus expresses Seo’s hidden Taoist fantasy in his seemingly practical approach to life and wellbeing. He fancies the expansive “to-be” garden, finds home in the deep “to-come” garden, and initiates his encyclopedic mind through the fantastic “to-become” garden. The name of the garden echoes Heidegger’s concept of “poetical becoming of Being” (Heidegger 1993, 176) and recalls a sixteenth-century Korean landscape poem that states,

The green hills—how can it be,
that they are green eternally?
Flowing streams—how can it be,
night and day do they never stand still?
We also, we can never stop,
we shall grow green eternally.⁵³

The poem above was written by Yi Hwang 李滉 (1501–1570), a Korean Neo-Confucianist philosopher and an early-Sirhak intellectual leader, whose philosophy advocated seeking the transcendental truth, *li* 理 (rationality of things),⁵⁴ through observing the lived world and authentic life. In the poem, he expresses his strong desire for the becoming of life towards eternity by *being* in nature (mountains and waters). Another influential early-Sirhak philosopher Yi I 李珥 (1536–1584) expressed a similar thought in his poem “In the Mountain:”

52. Seo Yugu’s annotation of Ni Zan’s garden buildings appears on the topic of “On Appropriate Layout” in the section “General Theories” right before the section “Gardens and Waters,” which includes the record of the “To-Become Garden.” On Ni’s garden buildings, Seo annotated: “Ni Zan 倪瓚 (art name, Yunlin 雲林) has his Hall of Clouds and Forest (雲林堂) and the Pavilion of Clear and Mystic Atmosphere (清秘閣). The latter building is especially famous in that if a guest does not qualify as a virtuous man, he is disallowed access.” Ni Zan (1301–1374), a late-Yuan-early-Ming-Dynasty Zen master painter, created the painting of the Garden of Lion Grove (獅子林) in Suzhou, and the garden, well known for its rockery labyrinth, was replicated by the Qing emperor Qianlong in his Garden of Perfect Brightness (圓明園) in Beijing. See Zou (2018).

53. Yi Hwang 李滉 (1501–1571), untitled poem, in Lee (1981, 96).

54. The Neo-Confucian metaphysical concept of *li* 理, which means “truth, principle, theory, rationality, or reason,” originated from the Neo-Confucianist philosophers Cheng Hao 程顥 and Zhu Xi 朱熹 of the eleventh to twelfth centuries in the Chinese Song Dynasty.

Picking herbs I lost the trail,
 Autumn leaves bury a thousand peaks.
 A monk returns with a bucket of water,
 At the grove's end steams the boiling tea.⁵⁵

Yi I's poem not only narrates the hermitage of mountain-dwelling but also alludes to Buddhist enlightenment through the transcendental emptiness of Zen.⁵⁶

Continuing the early Sirhak tradition of searching for transcendental *li* and primary *qi* (air, *pneuma*) through observing physical things in the world,⁵⁷ Seo Yugu introduced the Taoist imagination of dreaming and fantasy to provide a practical methodology for integrating and shuttling between reality and transcendental, the visible and the invisible, building and dreaming, and the hermitage and the divine paradise. His encyclopedia of rural living intended to demonstrate and convince his fellow countrymen that the self-sustained life of mountain-dwelling can be a practicable and joyful life model, a way of “economic and artistic uses of limited resources towards the utmost health and wellbeing of life” (*iyonghusaeng* 利用厚生),⁵⁸ which defines the social and philosophical ethos of the late Sirhak movement of the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries. Seo's interdisciplinary encyclopedia, which frequently and broadly refers to classic texts in Korean and Chinese histories, provides practical and cultural guidance for living in harmony with nature. The individual's health and wellbeing through the self-sustained life in nature that his book promotes is not merely physiological health, but rather, as Gadamer states,

We ourselves are part of nature and it is this nature within us, together with the self-sustaining organic defense system of our bodies, which is capable of sustaining our “inner” equilibrium. This is the unique interplay of functions that constitutes life. We can only oppose nature through being part of nature ourselves and through being sustained by nature (Gadamer 1996, 116).

55. Yi I 李珣 (1536–1584), “In the Mountain,” in Lee (1981, 156).

56. See Marc P. Keane, “The Art of Emptiness: The Gardens of Zen Buddhism,” in Keane (1996, 57). For a comparative architectural and philosophical study on the concept of “Zen space,” see Zou (2019).

57. For a comparative philosophical analysis on *li* (transcendental truth) and *qi* 氣 by the seventeenth-century German philosopher Gottfried Leibniz, see Zou (2011, 90–93). The original phrase “seeking knowledge through investigating physical things” (*gewu zhizhi* 格物致知) is from the chapter “Daxue” 大學 of the Confucian canon *Liji* 禮記 (The book of rites) and was later interpreted and adopted by Zhu Xi as the Neo-Confucian methodology. As for the application of this Neo-Confucian methodology in Confucian academy (*shuyuan* 書院) gardens, see Wu (2005).

58. The original phrase “liyong housheng” 利用厚生 is from the Confucian scripture *Shangshu* 尚書 (Book of documents), chapter “大禹謨.”

Gadamer's concept of the "inner equilibrium" of body, life, and soul echoes the book title of the tenth treatise, *Eudaimonia* (*Boyang* 保養), of Seo's encyclopedia on wellbeing and health in the Taoist tradition. In the fifteenth treatise, *Topographical Divination* (*Sangdaek* 相宅), he states that divining a building site should consider its "geography" as the first priority, then the inhabitant's "physiology," "heart" (humanity), and lastly "landscape." Only through the combined excellence of all four aspects can a "sustainable, healthy, and delightfully livable site" (*rakto* 樂土) be constituted, especially a landscape for the "cultivation and catharsis of temperament."⁵⁹

Seo's development of the late Sirhak concept of "wellbeing of life through practice" (*iyonghusaeng*) is concretized in his garden theories on mountain-dwelling. In Chapter 1, "General Theories," of the fourteenth treatise, *Pleasant Clouds*, on gardens, he analyzes the "seven scenic views of mountain-dwelling," "four methods of living in mountains," "divining buildings for entertaining an aged life," "planting plum-blossom trees and raising cranes," and the Taoist paradise "Little Penglai" by quoting a garden touring narrative originally written by the Chinese Ming-Dynasty scholar Chen Jiru,⁶⁰ and the "appropriate layout" of garden design by alluding to the Zen master painter Ni Zan's garden buildings. As stated by Seo, "If the heart can be projected into the far distance, the lived place will appear remote and tranquil; that means, the earthly world contains its own paradise, and there is no need to long for a celestial residence."⁶¹ It becomes clear that Seo Yugu wishes for the heavenly paradise through Taoist imagination and fantasy and seeks to live in an earthly paradise through practicing the Sirhak philosophy of wellbeing of life. Furthermore, following the Sirhak epistemological principle of "applying knowledge to daily life" (*gyeongsechiyong* 經世致用),⁶² he attempts to share his broad interdisciplinary knowledge, wisdom, and theories of self-sustained poetical life with society through his didactic encyclopedia and his own hermetic practice of mountain-dwelling.

Seo Yugu's connection with the Sirhak research methodology of "seeking the truth from historical facts" (*silsagusi* 實事求是)⁶³ or "textual criticism"

59. Seo Yugu, Ch. 1 "總論" (General theories), Vol. 15 "相宅志" (Treatise of topographical divination).

60. Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (Ming Dynasty), chapter 6 "Jing 景," in Chen (2006, 111).

61. Seo Yugu, Ch. 1 "總論" (General theories), Vol. 14 "怡云志" (Treatise of pleasant clouds).

62. The phrase *jingshi zhiyong* 經世致用 originally circulated in both the Chinese Ming-Dynasty Shixue 實學 (practical studies) and Korean Sirhak movements.

63. The phrase *shishi qishi* 實事求是 originates from Ban Gu's 班固 (Eastern Han Dynasty) *Hanshu* 漢書 (The book of han) (82 AD).

(*gojeunghak* 考證學)⁶⁴ can be observed in his nineteen annotations for the record of the “To-Become Garden,” thirteen of which are in Part 2 on the To-Become Garden and the other six on the To-Come Garden in Part 3. Carefully and critically analyzing the titled Ten Scenic-Views of the two gardens, which are listed as an appendix in Huang Zhouxing’s original garden record, Seo’s annotations focus on poetical meanings of garden views, historical and literary allusions, Buddhist and Taoist hermetic traditions, and social and cultural ethos. Seo’s 17th and 18th annotations, which are not touched upon in Huang’s original garden record, refer specifically to two groups of ethical figures in history whom he admired most: patriotic heroes and Taoist hermits.

The “practical knowledge” (Sirhak) presented by Seo Yugu’s garden theories not only provides principles for mountain-dwelling and the craft of garden creation but also is practiced through his own hermetic and self-sustainable life in nature. As a result, his encyclopedia presents a masterwork of interdisciplinary studies that enlighten the practice of a healthy and ethical life. In contrast to the specialization of modern technological knowledge, Seo’s encyclopedic knowledge attempts to preserve the traditional sense of cosmic wholeness, and in this sense, his nineteenth-century encyclopedic approach is comparable to the western encyclopedia movement of the Age of Enlightenment.⁶⁵ From a comparative philosophical perspective, Seo’s Sirhak approach of “practical learning and knowledge” is close to the ancient Greek concept of *phronesis* (practical wisdom and intelligence),⁶⁶ which, for Aristotle, serves not only “as the clever, skillful discovery of means for meeting specific tasks...but also as the sense for setting the goals themselves and taking responsibility for them” and such a long-term fixed goal, according to Gadamer, is “the totality of what it is to be human, with our *humanitas*” (Gadamer 1996, 47–48). In this sense, Seo’s practical knowledge towards the wellbeing of life is different from modern technological intelligence that tends to be “exercised without reservation or any sense of responsibility, to win from every situation a practical advantage and to profit from it” (48).

64. Dedicated to editing, annotating, and interpreting classic texts, the scholarship movement of “textual criticism” (*kaobengzue* 考證學 or *kaojuxue* 考據學) became popular in the Korean Sirhak and Chinese Shixue movements during the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. “Textual criticism” was also called *puxue* 樸學 (plain learning) during the Chinese Qing Dynasty.

65. Gadamer (1996, 8). From a comparative cultural perspective, Seo Yugu’s encyclopedic compilation of garden theories is comparable to Georges-Louis Le Rouge’s engraved garden encyclopedia in eighteenth-century France. See Zou (2011, 74).

66. Alberto Pérez-Gómez links the Greek concept of *phronesis* (practical knowledge) to other Greek concepts such as *theoria* (theory), *techne* (art and craftsmanship), *poiesis* (making and inspired poetry), and practice (*fabrica*, meditative making with hands) and interprets their semantic roots in the origin of architecture. See Pérez-Gómez (2016).

If we compare the earliest known Chinese garden treatise *Yuanye* 園冶 (literally, “Alchemy of Gardens”) (seventeenth century) and the earliest known Japanese garden treatise *Sakuteiki* 作庭記 (literally, “Record of Making Courtyard Gardens”) (eleventh century) with Seo Yugu’s garden treatise *Pleasant Clouds* (*Iun* 怡雲) (nineteenth century), the similarities and differences among the three East Asian garden treatises are illuminating. Comparisons can focus on four common aspects of Eastern gardens: water, rockery (symbolizing mountains), garden buildings, and garden aesthetics. Regarding their contents, *Yuanye* concentrates on garden buildings, rockery, and aesthetic theory; *Sakuteiki* emphasizes garden streams and rockery; while *Pleasant Clouds* highlights mountain-dwellings, garden buildings, and garden fantasy. Regarding garden buildings, in *Yuanye*, the types of garden buildings are categorized based on their spatial gestures (*se* 勢), and in *Pleasant Clouds*, the types of garden buildings are defined according to the life activity in a building. Regarding rockery, in *Yuanye*, the types of rockery are decided according to the relationship between a garden building and its nearby rocks, and the theory of rockery draws an analogy with the labyrinthian experience that is full of wonder and emotion (*jeong* 情); in *Pleasant Clouds*, the theory of rockery is linked to an experience of real mountains, such as the aesthetic experience of “remote depth” (*yusim* 幽深), “spectacular delight” (*gichwi* 奇趣), and “empty mountains” (*jeogyeosallim* 寂如山林); and in *Sakuteiki*, the theory of rockery emphasizes stone groupings in a good balance to imitate nature but avoids “phantom stones” (evil-spirit stones).⁶⁷ Regarding garden aesthetics, *Yuanye* contributes the theory of “borrowing scenic-views” (*chagyaeong* 借景); *Sakuteiki* utilizes the concept of “subtle atmosphere” (*pungjeong* 風情, literally “wind and emotion”); and *Pleasant Clouds* draws a Taoist cosmology and paradisiac fantasy.⁶⁸ It becomes clear that the record of the To-Become Garden is a key aesthetic component of Seo Yugu’s garden theory, which integrates the Sirhak practice of self-sustainable life and the Taoist fantasy for paradise. As a nineteenth-century Taoist hermit in the dominantly Neo-Confucian and practical-learning social context of Korea, Seo, in Nietzsche’s words, “is always in his *own* company, whether he deals with books, men, or landscapes” (Nietzsche 1968, 520).

67. Ji Cheng, Ch. 8 “掇山” (Making artificial hills), Ji (1999, 206); Seo Yugu, “池邊石假山法” (Method of making an artificial hill near a pool), Section “園林澗沼” (Gardens and waters), *Iun ji* (Treatise of pleasant clouds); Ch. IX “Setting Stones” and Ch. X “Taboos” (Takei and Keane 2001, 184, 188–189).

68. Ji Cheng, Ch. 10 “借景” (Borrowing scenic-views) (1999, 243); Takei and Keane (2001, 153); Seo Yugu, “將就園” (To-become garden), “龍圖墅” (Dragon-map villa), and “龜文園” (Turtle-shell-texture garden), in Section “園林澗沼,” *Iun ji* (Treatise of pleasant clouds).

Playing on the borderline between fiction and reality, the fantasy garden is for Chinese literati the garden paradise within the mind built through literary work, but for Korean scholars like Seo Yugu, it configures the true view of practicable mountain-dwelling of a Taoist hermit. This historical line of fantasy gardens in the East Asian tradition lends itself to flourish in Japan's *kare-san-sui* (dry gardens), in which the Zen Buddhist mind is built as a real garden for meditating on transcendental emptiness. Predicting the dawn of modernity, Seo's practical knowledge (Sirhak) of garden fantasy echoes the semantic root of *theoria* that is "a kind of wonder, a kind of observation of something divine" (Hickman 1990, 108).

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