



한옥문화의 세계화를 위한 인문학적 가치 발굴 연구(2)

— 한옥의 세계관 —

Exploring the Values of the Hanok in the Humanities (2)

— Religious Symbolism in Hanok —

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Exploring the Values of the Hanok in the Humanities 2

- Religious Symbolism in Hanok -

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This study examines the existing researches in the humanities in order to understand the culture of ‘Hanok’ – the traditional Korean housing – comprehensively by extending its concept which is often considered as a physical object. In other words, this study was planned to discover a view of world, nature and human regarding Hanok, as well as to restructure the concept of Hanok which consists of such values. In the first year, the research was conducted mainly on the origin and the development process of aesthetics in contemporary Hanok especially focused on the vocabularies describing the beauty of Hanok. As the second research, this paper examines Korean’s outlook that addressed in Hanok. Hereafter, the researches will continue to a study on a view of nature of Hanok including sustainability, climate, location, as well as the humanistic view and Hanok, such as living culture, ritual, and folklore in the Hanok housing. This is a research investigating the humanistic values for globalizing the culture of Hanok that combines both its intangible values and physical forms that will provide a fundamental groundwork to establish the direction of the government policy that can promote Hanok.

To understand the world view of Han-Ok, the study started from the visible objects firstly, because this could be a more efficient approach to study the combination of ‘form’ and ‘value’ of Hanok from its physical components rather than categorizing all the complex world view according by philosophy or religion. In result, the world view of Hanok can be most visualized via specific objects that are considered as a part of the Korean Familial Folk Religion, as well as Chinese characters as the essence of Confucianism culture. Each component is the most significant part that gives Hanok sacred and dignified characteristics by aligning the context of structure and its spacing within the family such as male and female family members, the main house and the men’s part of a house.

Firstly, the Korean Familial Folk Religion divinizes a house; therefore it defines every place in the house as space for worship. In the traditional Korean housing, the Korean Familial Folk Religion means a praying for family members through a house as a medium. Every ritual related in housing creates a sacred atmosphere, and also redefines a house as a place where Gods are living together.

There are various types of god in Hanok. ‘Sung-Ju’ protects a house at its most holistic location, the floor; ‘Teo-Ju’ takes care of the backyard; ‘Jo-Wang’ maintains the kitchen area, ‘Sam-shin’ is in the master bedroom, and ‘Chosang-shin’ stays at Sa-dang, the family shrine. Additionally, there are ‘Jangdock-shin’ which takes care of the platform for crocks of sauces and condiments; ‘Gachook-shin’ for the stable, ‘Yong-shin’ for the well, ‘Cheuk-shin’ for the toilet, ‘Mun-shin’ for the main gate, and ‘Madang-shin’ for the garden. In some cases, there are more types of god in the house, for example, ‘Gul-ttuk-shin’ for the chimney, ‘Jiboong-shin’ for the roof and ‘Chulryung’, ‘Up-shin’, ‘Chilsung’ and so on. Since these house gods are all connected with its house, it will no longer have such power and values in case the family moves to a new place, thus the family needs to enshrine new divinities there.

This Korean Familial Folk Religion was mainly maintained by female members of the family, to wish the peace and the happiness of a family. Also, reflecting the agrarian society culture, these house gods are often embodied in a form of crops, rice plants and straw. The core of the Korean Familial Folk Religion is to pray for the prosperity of its descendant and the peace of a family. Although there is sometime a different type of house god such as ‘Up-shin’ who protects and increases the family’s wealth, it was not that significant in the Korean Familial Folk Religion. Meaning, the Korean Familial Folk Religion is the embodiment of motherhood represented by materials and actions.

The reason behind this Korean Familial Folk Religion has been inherited mainly by female members is related to the exclusive tradition of the Confucianism society. In contrast to this, male members of a family participate in rituals for gods such as ‘Sung-Ju’ and ‘Chosang(ancestors)-shin’ that originated from the Confucianism culture. Although it is difficult to find such rituals these days due to modernization of the society and lifestyle, the value of Hanok as the space of embodiment of motherhood is still full of suggestions in contemporary architecture.

Secondly, Confucian world view has created identities to Hanok by providing the same personality with the house owner. The world view of Hanok which was represented by ‘Hyun-pan (a name tablet)’, ‘Juryun (a verse couplet)’ and ‘Dangho (a name of the house)’ implies the efforts of the house owner to put his/her personality as well as ideals into the house. While Hanok varies with the characteristics of architecture such as palace, housing, and ritual building, eventually, the key elements of Hanok are the house owner or lifestyle of the residents to shape its form.

For instance, Yeongyeong-dang, the palace architecture, was named in the meaning of ‘spreading happy occasions out’, considering it is an office for the King. Sung-Ju Chuwon-dang, the ancestral ritual architecture, has its root in ‘Hak-Yi-Pyun’ in the Analects of Confucius, meaning the memorial house of ancestors. Such names remind people of its meaning and values when they are using those architectures and call those names. Dangho, which is a name of the house, was also a penname of the house owner. Once such philosophy of the owner is reflected in the name of the house, there is no distinction available between the house and its residents. Therefore, the form of housing as well as every event occurred within a house should be aligned with its name, Dangho. Hanok also has ‘Juryun’, a verse couplet which is posted on each pillar of the house, containing wisdom of life that the residents should keep in his/her mind.

To sum up, traditionally, Hanok used to be a ritual space where people are praying for the safety and the prosperity of their family, as well as an educational space for self-examination on the life values and meaning of a family. However, in the contemporary Korean society, such ritual and educational functions that the traditional housing used to have has tarnished. Such trend results the values and the meanings of housing become faint, while it is focusing on the convenience of housing, and less consider the family’s love and educational perspective in housing. Therefore, this study will be a meaningful work to discover the traditional outlook of Korean culture related in Hanok in today’s Korean society.

Key words: Korean world view, deity of one’s family, Dangho