

# A Study on the Introduction of Chinese Epigraphic Rubbings of Ancient Texts 古文碑帖 into Chosŏn from the 17th to 19th Century and Its Reception\*

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Ancient stone inscriptions composed in ancient script 古文字, known as epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts 古文碑帖, are confirmed to have been introduced into Chosŏn in large numbers beginning in the late sixteenth century. The interest in epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts during the late Chosŏn period stemmed from the fervent enthusiasm for epigraphy 金石 and epigraphic compilations 金石帖. Starting with the 17th-century Envoys to Beijing 燕行 led by Rangŏn'gun Yi U 朗善君 李侯, Chosŏn envoys who admired epigraphy and calligraphy acquired *Shiguwen* 石鼓文, *Shenyubei* 神禹碑, and *Yishanbei* 嶧山碑, thus giving rise to the enthusiasm for epigraphy beginning in the 17th century, which extended to the domain of epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts. What is especially noteworthy is that in the late Chosŏn period, epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts were not merely briefly described but rather were subjected to in-depth analysis and decipherment of characters and texts from a philological standpoint.

*Shiguwen* 石鼓文, the first stone-carved poetic inscription in China, is confirmed to have been introduced already in the 15th century and was brought in repeatedly through 17th to 19th-century Envoys to Beijing. Accordingly, Chosŏn literati revealed a general philological consciousness by citing works such as *Rixia jiuwen kao* 日下舊聞考, *Daxing xianzhi* 大興縣志, and *Dijing jingwu lue* 帝京景物略 to investigate the textual transmission of the Shigu 石鼓. *Shenyubei* is presumed to have been introduced during the 16th to 17th centuries, and it is confirmed that a rubbing of *Shenyubei* had already been brought into Chosŏn by 1659, as evidenced through a classical Chinese poem by Yun Hyu 尹鑄 (1617–1680). Hŏ Mok 許穆 (1595–1682) identified the edition of *Shenyubei* purchased by Yi U, Nam Kŭk'gwan 南克寬 (1689–1714) criticized the cultural value of *Shenyubei* with striking acuity, and Sŏng Haeŭng 成海應 (1760–1839) synthesized and organized the theories concerning the transmission and excavation of *Shenyubei*. Moreover, Chosŏn literati appreciated the aesthetic quality of the calligraphy in the inscription of *Yishanbei* from the early stage of its introduction and actively embraced its calligraphic style, exhibiting a philological attitude regarding issues such as the authenticity and authorship of the stele.

**Keywords:** Epigraphic Rubbings of Ancient Texts, *Shiguwen*, *Shenyubei*, *Yishanbei*, Epigraphic Studies

## Introduction

Epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts 古文碑帖 are stele rubbings composed in ancient script that faithfully preserve the *graphological structure* and artistic value

of ancient script and ancient characters. Since the texts in epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts, in terms of their *principles of character construction* and *characteral forms*, differ entirely from modern Chinese characters, it is necessary to understand the concept and characteristics of ancient script before examining epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts themselves. According to Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭 (2002), the transformation process of Chinese script can be broadly divided into two phases: the ancient character stage 古文字 and the clerical-regular script stage 隸·楷.<sup>1</sup> Historically, the ancient character stage spans from the late Shang 商 period to the Qin 秦 dynasty, and based on formal features, it can be classified into Shang characters, Western Zhou and Spring–Autumn characters 西周春秋 文字, Six States characters 六國 文字, and Qin characters 秦系 文字. These categories encompass script forms such as oracle bone script 甲骨文, bronze inscriptions 金文, large seal script 大篆 (also called Zhouwen 籀文), and small seal script 小篆.<sup>2</sup> Zhang Zhenglang 張政烺 (1988) had also previously discussed the implications of ancient script. He stated that the term refers to the script forms of ancient Chinese characters and, in general, encompasses all scripts used before the Qin empire's standardization of writing. In its broad sense, ancient script originated in the Shang period and continued to be used thereafter, characterized by its independence from temporal, spatial, or morphological restrictions.<sup>3</sup>

Although the corpus of ancient script materials currently unearthed is vast and diverse—including oracle bone inscriptions and bronze inscriptions recorded on ritual vessels such as *ding* 鼎, *pan* 盤, *gui* 簋, *fu* 簠, and *jue* 爵—the works that exerted profound influence on the history of calligraphy as epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts are limited to *Shiguwen* 石鼓文, *Shenyubei* 神禹碑, and *Yishanbei* 嶧山碑.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts written in seal script 篆書 and other styles are thought to have been introduced to the Korean Peninsula relatively late and only began to circulate widely from the Chosŏn dynasty.<sup>5</sup> The imported epigraphic rubbings in ancient script were not only actively embraced as models of calligraphic style but were also utilized as crucial materials for epigraphic studies and philological research. Particularly in the late Chosŏn period, calligraphic styles aspiring to the ancient methods developed in diverse directions.

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<sup>1</sup> Qiu Xigui, *Wenzixuegaiyao* 文字學概要 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou tushu youxiangongsi, 2001), p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.55.

<sup>3</sup> Zhang Zhenglang, *Zhongguo dabaik quanshu·yuyuan wenzi* 中國大百科全書·語言文字 (Beijing: Zhongguo dabaik chubanshe, 1998), p.102.

<sup>4</sup> Cong Wenjun, *Zhongguo shufashi·Xianqin qindai* 中國書法史·先秦秦代卷 (Nanjing: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe, 2021), p.123.

<sup>5</sup> Kim Kisŭng, *Han'guksŏyesa* 한국서예사 (Seoul: Chŏngŭmsa, 1975), p. 267.

Calligraphers including Rangsŏn'gun Yi U 朗善君 李俟 (1637–1693) were devoted to the ancient methods of the Wei–Jin 魏晉 period while also according significant importance to earlier epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts. Moreover, as the achievements of epigraphic studies from the Song 宋 (960–1297), Ming 明 (1368–1644), and Qing 清 (1636–1912) dynasties gradually entered Chosŏn and domestic research in epigraphy flourished, understanding of ancient epigraphic characters deepened, leading to the emergence of numerous scholars engaged in the study of epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts.<sup>6</sup>

This article therefore aims to examine the interest in epigraphy during the late Chosŏn period, trace the paths by which epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts—such as *Shiguwen*, *Shenyubei*, and *Yishanbei*—were introduced, and investigate how Chosŏn literati in the 17th to 19th centuries received these works in both epigraphic and philological terms.

### Enthusiasm for Epigraphic Studies and Interest in Epigraphic Rubbings of Ancient Texts

Epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts served as exemplary models for the study of calligraphy and as important materials for epigraphy. Although they began to be introduced in earnest during the late Chosŏn period, interest in epigraphy had already persisted on the Korean Peninsula beforehand. While it is difficult to determine precisely when this interest arose, the fact that epigraphic materials from ancient times have been transmitted, along with the growing attention to script forms in the late Chosŏn period, suggests that collections of calligraphic models containing the works of renowned historical figures and stele inscriptions composed of assembled characters were in vogue, and the practice of making rubbings was likely widespread.<sup>7</sup>

In the early Chosŏn period, interest in epigraphy does not appear to have been particularly pronounced. However, after the widespread destruction of cultural heritage during the Imjin waeran (1592–1598) and the Pyŏngja horan (1636–1637), the literati developed a sense of nostalgia for the Era of King Sŏnjo 宣祖 (1567–1608), a time when literature and the arts had flourished under royal patronage and interest. This trend began in the early 17th century and deepened following the Injo Panjŏng (1623), and the compilation of rubbings of epigraphic texts in the 17th century must be understood within this historical context.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, by the mid-17th century, epigraphic texts such as *Jigu lu* 集古錄 by Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) and *Jinshi lu* 金石錄 by Zhao Mingcheng 趙明誠 (1081–1129) had been introduced into Chosŏn. As a result, scholars with antiquarian and broad antiquity-oriented dispositions engaged in highly active stele

<sup>6</sup> Yi Wan-u, “Chosŏn hugiŭi munhwa-sŏye” 조선 후기의 문화—서예, *Hakkuksa* 35 (1998): 481.

<sup>7</sup> Ch'oe Yŏngsŏng, “Han'gukkŭmsŏk'agŭi sŏngnipkwa palchŏn-yŏn'gusaŭi chŏngni.” 韓國金石學의 성립과 발전 — 研究史의 整理 —, *Tongyanggojŏnyŏn'gu* 26 (2007): 384–388.

<sup>8</sup> Nam Tongsin, “Kŭmsŏkch'ŏngwan yŏn'gu” 金石清玩 연구, *Han'gukchungsesayŏn'gu* 34 (2012): 367–368.

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collecting as a form of aesthetic appreciation. Subsequently, through the Reign of King Sukchong (1674–1720) and particularly following the Reigns of Kings Yŏngjo (1724–1776) and Chŏngjo (1776–1800), epigraphic scholarship came to be pursued in earnest with the reception of Qing-dynasty evidential learning.<sup>9</sup>

The representative works on epigraphic texts 金石文 produced in Chosŏn between the 17th and 19th centuries can be summarized as follows.<sup>10</sup>

Table 1. Authored Works Related to Epigraphic Texts in Chosŏn from the 17th to 19th Centuries

Author	Work	Category
Yi Huyuŏn 李厚源 (1598–1660)	<i>Kŭmsŏngnok</i> 金石錄	Collection
Cho Suk 趙涑 (1595–1668)	<i>Kŭmsŏkch'ŏngwan</i> 金石清玩	Collection
Yi U 李俔 (1637–1693)	<i>Taedong Kŭmsŏk Sŏ</i> 大東金石書	Collection
	<i>Tongguk Myŏngp'ilch'ap</i> 東國名筆帖	Collection
	<i>Taedong Kŭmsŏknok</i> 大東金石錄	Authored work
Unknown	<i>Che Kŭmsŏk chi mun</i> 諸金石之文	Collection
Kim Suchŭng 金壽增 (1624–1701)	<i>Kŭmsŏkch'ong</i> 金石叢	Collection
Unknown	<i>Kŭmsŏkch'ŏngwan</i> 金石清玩	Collection
Nam Hagmyŏng 南鶴鳴 (1654–1722)	<i>Chapkoch'ap</i> 集古帖	Collection
Rangwŏn'gun 朗原君 (1640–1699)	<i>Haedongjipkorok</i> 海東集古錄	Collection
Cho Kŭn 趙根 (1631–1690)	<i>Punggyemallok</i> 楓溪漫錄	Authored work
Unknown	<i>Kŭmsŏkki</i> 金石記	Collection
Kim Chae-ro 金在魯 (1682–1759)	<i>Kŭmsŏknok</i> 金石錄	Collection
Yu Ch'ŏkki 俞拓基 (1691–1767)	<i>Kŭmsŏknok</i> 金石錄	Collection
	<i>Taedong Kŭmsŏkch'ap</i> 大東金石帖	Collection
	<i>Kŭmsŏkchongmok</i> 金石揔目	Authored work
Unknown	<i>Haedong Kŭmsŏknok</i> 海東金石錄	Authored work
Pak Chiwŏn 朴趾源 (1637–1805)	<i>Kŭmsŏknok</i> 金石錄	Authored work

<sup>9</sup> Yi Wan-u, “Pich'ŏbŭro pon han'guksŏyega-nangwŏn'gun iuŭi taedonggŭmsŏksŏ” 비첩으로 본 한국 서예가—朗善君 李俔의 大東金石書, *Kuk'akyŏn'gu* 1 (2002): 1-3.

<sup>10</sup> Additionally, late Chosŏn scholars such as N Nam Kong-ch'ŏl, Hong Yangho, Hong Kyŏngmo, Sŏng Haeŭng, Kim Chŏnghŭi composed colophons on epigraphic rubbings through which they articulated their views on epigraphy. Pak Ch'ŏlsang, “Chosŏnshidae kŭmsŏk'ang yŏn'gu” 朝鮮時代 金石學 研究, Ph.D. diss., Sangmyung University, 2014.

Yun Tongsök 尹東哲 (1718–1798)	<i>Noyun Samgwan t'ong</i> 老耘三官通	Authored work
Sō Yuku 徐有渠 (1764–1845)	<i>Tongguk Kūmsōk</i> 東國金石	Authored work
Yu Pongye 柳本藝 (1777–1842)	<i>Suhōn Pangp'inok</i> 樹軒訪碑錄	Authored work
Unknown	<i>Tongguk Kūmsōkp'ŏng</i> 東國金石評	Authored work
Yi Chomuk 李祖默 (1792–1840)	<i>Naryō Imnangko</i> 羅麗琳瑯攷	Authored work
Pang Hūiyong 方羲鏞	<i>Yewōnjinch'e</i> 隸源津逮	Authored work
Yi Yuwōn 李裕元 (1814–1888)	<i>Kyōngju Isi Kūmsōknok</i> 慶州李氏金石錄	Authored work
	<i>Kūmhaesōngmokkp'ŏn Sō</i> 金薤石墨編序	Authored work
Kim Pyōngsōn 金秉善	<i>Kūmsōkmokk'oram</i> 金石目攷覽	Authored work
O Kyōngsōk 吳慶錫 (1831–1879)	<i>Samhan Kūmsōknok</i> 三韓金石錄	Authored work
Sō Sang'u 徐相雨 (1831–1903)	<i>Naryō Pangp'inok</i> 羅麗訪碑錄	Authored work

As shown in the table, from the seventeenth century onward, certain royal relatives and Yangban literati of the capital actively engaged in collecting rubbings and conducting philological investigations of epigraphic inscriptions, thereby enthusiastically advancing the study of epigraphy.

Although it is difficult to determine exactly when scholars began to take conscious interest in epigraphy and to approach it with philological rigor, it appears that such efforts began as early as the Koryō period. From that time, literati seem to have attempted evidential investigations of Chinese epigraphy. In the late Koryō period, Yi Inno 李仁老 (1152–1220), upon reading epigraphic records and poetic writings about the stone drums 石鼓, was so moved that he composed a long poem of twenty rhyming lines<sup>11</sup>

The stone drums, located within the temple of Confucius in Qiyang 岐陽, had been transmitted through poetry and writings for nearly two thousand years from the Zhou 周 dynasty to the Tang 唐 dynasty. However, they are scarcely attested in historical records and the writings of the various philosophical schools 諸子百家. Wei Yingwu 韋應物 (737–792), and Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) were both deeply knowledgeable about antiquity; yet, although they identified these drums as the stele 碣 of King Xuan of Zhou 周宣王 (841–782 BCE), they still recorded them in lyrical verse and analyzed them in full detail. Ouyang Xiu also stated that there were three points of doubt concerning the *Shiguwen*. I happened to read his writing yesterday at the calligraphy library, and

<sup>11</sup> Tian Juan, “Chosōnmunindūrūi sōkkoe taehan kwanshimgwa kwallyōn shimun koch'al” 조선문인들의 石鼓에 대한 관심과 관련 시문 고찰, *Tongainmunhak* 35 (2016): 3-5.



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it struck a chord with me, so I composed a twenty-rhyme poem and await the evaluation of gentlemen of later generations.<sup>12</sup>

This record confirms that the *Jigu lu* by Ouyang Xiu had already been introduced into Koryŏ and that literati had begun to take interest in Chinese epigraphy recorded therein. Moreover, in the early Chosŏn period, Kim Sishŭp 金時習 (1435–1493) once praised a monk's calligraphy, stating: "His strange tales are mixed with Daoist philosophy, and his brushwork descends from the *Shiguwen*." From this, it can be inferred that not merely written references to the stones drums but actual rubbings of the *Shiguwen* had already been introduced into early Chosŏn. The stele 碣 related to King Xuan's hunting expedition, found in the *Shiguwen* and extensively documented in works such as the *Jigu lu*, as well as classical poems on the same theme by poets such as Wei Yingwu, Han Yu, and Su Shi 苏轼 (1037–1101), were widely circulated among the literati of Chosŏn. Thus, it seems that the rubbings of the stone drums, namely the *Shiguwen*, had already entered Chosŏn prior to the enthusiasm for epigraphy of the seventeenth century.<sup>13</sup>

Unlike the *Shiguwen*, which had already been introduced in the early Chosŏn period, the *Yishanbei* and *Shenyubei* began to be imported later, during the late Chosŏn period through envoys to Beijing. Hong Ŏnch'ung 洪彦忠 (1473–1508) once praised the calligraphy of Yi Chŏng 李正 in *Cheijŏngmun* 祭李正文, stating: "Without even soiling his sleeves, he vigorously and convincingly reproduced the *Yishanbei* and the *Lanting xu*."<sup>14</sup> Likewise, Kwŏn Munhae (1534–1591) pointed out that the transmitted version of the *Yishanbei* had lost much of its original authenticity.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, records pertaining to epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts begin to appear in literary collections from the seventeenth century onward. That is, from the seventeenth century, epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts began to be introduced in earnest. It may be said that Rangŏn'gun Yi U and Hŏ Mok played significant roles in the dissemination and popularization of these rubbings.

Rangŏn'gun Yi U was the culminating figure in the cultural achievements of seventeenth-century royal relatives of Sŏnjo, building on the tradition of calligraphy and painting collection and artistic sensibilities passed down from Ichŏnggun 義昌君 (1428–1460), Insŏnggun 仁城君 (1588–1628), and Inhŏnggun 仁興君 (1604–1651). Drawing on the scholarly and artistic influence of his father Inhŏnggun, his three envoys to Beijing, and his association with the great scholar Hŏ Mok, he earned renown as a collector and editor of calligraphic and pictorial works. His life illustrates how princes of Sŏnjo families in the seventeenth century accepted and practiced new cultural trends introduced into

<sup>12</sup> Yi Inno, *P'ahanjip* 破閒集 vol 2. "石鼓在岐陽孔子廟中, 自周至唐幾二千載. 詩書所傳及諸史百子中, 固無所傳. 且韋韓二公皆博古者, 何以即謂周宣王鼓, 著於歌詞, 剖析無遺. 歐陽子亦以爲有三疑焉. 昨在書樓, 偶讀其文, 有會於予心者, 吟成二十韻, 以待後世君子."

<sup>13</sup> Tian Juan, op. cit., pp.7-8.

<sup>14</sup> Hong Ŏnch'ung, *Cheijŏngjagwangmun* 祭李正字光文, in *Uamjip* 寓庵集 vol.1 (Seoul: Institute for the Translation of Korean Classics, 1988).

<sup>15</sup> Kwŏn Munhae, Ch'assanggyesap'aryŏngnuŏm 次雙溪寺八詠樓韻, in Ch'oganjip 草澗集, vol. 1. "玉筋銀鈎森欲動, 失真誰數嶧山碑."

Chosŏn.<sup>16</sup> Accounts referring to Rangŏn'gun emphasize his fame as a practitioner of calligraphy, highlighting that he not only authored many stele inscriptions and hanging plaques but also collected and studied historical epigraphic.<sup>17</sup> He organized rubbings of steles and compiled the epigraphic anthology *Taedong kŭmsŏksŏ* 大東金石書, and during his missions to Beijing, he purchased Chinese epigraphic compilations and conducted active philological research together with noted scholars such as Hŏ Mok.

Particularly during his 1663 envoy to Beijing, Rangŏn'gun and his party acquired numerous stele rubbings, including Wang Xizhi's 王羲之 (303–361) *Shiqiqtie* 十七帖, *Shengjiaoxu* 聖教序, and *Huangtingjing* 黃庭經, as well as Huai Su's 懷素 (737–799) *Qianziwentie* 千字文帖. Among them, the *Shenyubei* 神禹碑, said to have been carved during the Xia 夏 dynasty, was introduced to Chosŏn for the first time.<sup>18</sup> This rare example of a stele in ancient script drew widespread attention and played a key role in igniting the enthusiasm for epigraphy and ancient script in late Chosŏn. Hŏ Mok found inspiration in the Chinese epigraphic compilations that Rangŏn'gun brought back—including the *Shenyubei*—and developed his own unique script style.<sup>19</sup> Later scholars continued to conduct philological research on the *Shenyubei*.

A royal descendant, Rangŏn'gun traveled to China as an envoy after the Pyŏngja horan and brought back the seventy-seven characters from the *Nanyue zhishu bei* 南嶽治水碑 of the Xia dynasty. As characters in that era were created by modeling the shapes of objects, the script resembled forms such as dragons, snakes, and plants, making it a marvelous trace of antiquity and a genuine artifact of the Three Dynasties 三代. Moreover, Rangŏn'gun possessed the *Shiguwen* by Shi Zhou 史籀 of the Western Zhou 西周 and the *Yishanbei* in small seal script by Qin 秦 prime minister Li Si 李斯 (280–208 BCE). Such a collection could only be acquired by one with a profound love of calligraphy.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Hwang Chŏngyŏn, “Nangŏn'gun iu, 17segi changshik'an yesul achoga” 낭선군 이우, 17세기 장식한 예술 애호가, *Naeirŭl yŏnŭn yŏksa* 38 (2010): 213.

<sup>17</sup> Hwang Chŏngyŏn, “Nangŏn'gun iuŭi sŏhwa sujanggwa p'yŏnch'an” 낭선군 이우의 서화 수장과 편찬, *Changsŏgak* 9 (2003): 12–15.

<sup>18</sup> On his third envoy to Beijing in 1663, Nangŏn'gun viewed stone inscriptions by Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322) and calligraphic boards by Li Bai (701–762). Members of his entourage, including Pak Yuchŏl, Pak Yuki, actively acquired rubbings of works by Wang Xizhi and Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470–1559). On August 10, 1663, Yi U personally purchased two copies of the *Guzhuan shenyubei* and *Qianwen jigutie* directly through Wang Yi in Fengrun, Hebei. Hwang Chŏngyŏn, “Nangŏn'gun iuŭi sŏhwa sujanggwa p'yŏnch'an” 낭선군 이우의 서화 수장과 편찬, *Changsŏgak* 9 (2003): 33–35.

<sup>19</sup> Hong Yangho, *Chech'ŏkchudonghaebi* 題陟州東海碑, in *Igyejip* 耳溪集 vol 16. “東方之文, 眉叟最古, 往往類秦碑漢鼎, 筆則效周太史而自創新體.”

<sup>20</sup> Hŏ Mok, *Samdaegomunbal* 三代古文跋, in *Kiyŏn* 記言 vol 10. “王孫朗善君亂後觀於故國, 得夏后氏南嶽治水碑七十七文. 當時象物制書, 字體類龍蛇草木形, 千古異蹟, 信三代之物也. 又西周史籀石鼓文, 秦丞相斯小篆嶧山碑, 皆在王孫, 嗜書非至篤好, 其何以得此.”

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Rangsŏn'gun and Hŏ Mok maintained similar positions in both artistic taste and scholarly interest, particularly sharing a strong enthusiasm for the ancient studies movement of their time. As is well known, Hŏ Mok championed the Xia 夏, Yin 殷, and Zhou 周 dynasties of China as ideal eras and believed that both art and governance should find their direction within them. His collected writings, *Kiyŏn* 記言, include multiple anecdotes about his interactions with Rangsŏn'gun, such as Hŏ Mok writing colophons for epigraphic compilations in Rangsŏn'gun's collection or Rangsŏn'gun showing Hŏ Mok stele rubbings.<sup>21</sup>

As seen above, Hŏ Mok expressed admiration for Rangsŏn'gun's passion for calligraphy as he introduced the so-called Three Dynasties rubbings—the *Shenyubei*, *Shiguwen*, and *Yishanbei*, representing Xia 夏, Zhou 周, and Qin 秦. Enchanted by the archaic spirit embodied in the Chinese rubbings, Hŏ Mok pursued a return to ancient seal script, thereby challenging the elegant yet aristocratic aesthetics of early Chosŏn typified by the Songsŏlch'e 松雪體 and the superficial emulation of Wang Xizhi's style dominant in the calligraphic world of late Chosŏn. As a result, he cultivated various ancient seal forms and developed a wholly original script style.<sup>22</sup>

In other words, influenced by the scholarly and artistic legacy of his father Inhŏnggun, Rangsŏn'gun in the seventeenth century not only collected and researched Korean epigraphic compilations but also brought Chinese epigraphic rubbings into Chosŏn, thereby creating the objective conditions for the later enthusiasm for epigraphy. Hŏ Mok, by restoring the Three Dynasties rubbings into ancient seal script, developed a new style and played a key role in reviving seal script in the calligraphic world of late Chosŏn.

Furthermore, another contemporary, Kim Suchŭng 金壽增 (1624–1701), who excelled in seal script and reached the realm of Exquisite Subtlety 精妙, devoted himself to collecting Chinese epigraphic compilations and compiled the anthology *Kŭmsŏkch'ong* 金石叢. He also reprinted the *Yishanbei*, which had been introduced to Chosŏn, contributing significantly to the spread of seal script rubbings 篆書碑帖. Song Siyŏl 宋時烈 (1607–1689), a leading figure of the Noron faction, also showed considerable interest in the newly introduced epigraphic rubbings in ancient script. Thus, seventeenth-century Chosŏn literati, regardless of political faction, actively engaged with imported Chinese rubbings in ancient script, laying the social foundation for the rise of great collectors of Chinese epigraphic compilations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

### Philological Decipherment of Epigraphic Rubbings of Ancient Texts

Before examining perceptions of epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts in late Chosŏn, it is necessary first to summarize the extant Colophons 題跋, Identifications 識文, and Prefaces 序文 related to these rubbings.

<sup>21</sup> Hwang Chŏngyŏn, op. cit., pp.216-217.

<sup>22</sup> Han Minchŏng, "Hŏmokkwa igwangsaui pokkoŭishige taehan koch'al" 許穆과 李匡師의復古意識에 대한考察, *Sŏyebip'yŏng* 4 (2009): 74-75.



Table 2. Colophons, Inscriptions, and Prefaces on epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts in Chosŏn from the 17th to 19th Century

Author	Colophons, Identifications, Prefaces	Epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts
Hŏ Mok 許穆 (1595~1682)	<i>Samdaegomunbal</i> 三代古文跋	<i>Shenyubei</i> 神禹碑, <i>Shiguwen</i> 石鼓文, <i>Yishanbei</i> 嶧山碑
	<i>Hyŏngsan Shinubibal</i> 衡山神禹碑跋	<i>Shenyubei</i> 神禹碑
Song Siyŏl 宋時烈 (1607~1689)	<i>Chunggak Yŏksanbibal</i> 重刻嶧山碑跋	<i>Yishanbei</i> 嶧山碑
	<i>Chinjŏnch'ŏpbal</i> 秦篆帖跋	<i>Yishanbei</i> 嶧山碑
	<i>Sŏ Sŏkkoch'ŏp'u</i> 書石鼓帖後	<i>Shiguwen</i> 石鼓文
Yi Manbu 李萬敷 (1664~1732)	<i>Sŏ Isasojŏnch'ŏp</i> 書李斯小篆帖	<i>Yishanbei</i> 嶧山碑
Pak T'ae-mu 朴泰茂 (1677~1756)	<i>Inurong Sojŭngdae'u P'yŏngsut'ojŏnsŏ</i> 李訥翁所贈大禹平水土篆序	<i>Dae'u P'yŏngsut'ojŏn</i> 大禹平水土篆
An Myŏng-ha 安命夏 (1682~1752)	<i>Ujŏn Byŏngp'unggi</i> 禹篆屏風記	<i>Shenyubei</i> 神禹碑
Yi Kichi 李器之 (1690~1722)	<i>Sŏkkoch'ŏpsŏ</i> 石鼓帖序	<i>Shiguwen</i> 石鼓文
Yi Kwang-sa 李匡師 (1705~1777)	<i>Non Yŏksanbi</i> 論嶧山碑	<i>Yishanbei</i> 嶧山碑
Nam Kong-ch'ŏl 南公轍 (1760~1840)	<i>U P'yŏngsut'och'an Sŏkkŏk</i> 禹平水土贊石刻	<i>Dae'u P'yŏngsut'ojŏn</i> 大禹平水土篆
	<i>Chinyŏksan Gaksŏngmukkak</i> 秦嶧山刻石墨刻	<i>Yishanbei</i> 嶧山碑
	<i>Chibusan Gaksŏngmukpon</i> 芝罘山刻石墨本	<i>ChibuGaksŏk</i> 芝罘刻石
Yi Sŏ-gu 李書九 (1754~1825)	<i>Sŏkko Sŏ</i> 石鼓序	<i>Shiguwen</i> 石鼓文
Sŏng Haeŭng 成海應 (1760~1839)	<i>Che Sŏkkomunhu</i> 題石鼓文後	<i>Shiguwen</i> 石鼓文
	<i>Shinyubibal</i> 神禹碑跋	<i>Shenyubei</i> 神禹碑
Sŏ Yuku 徐有渠 (1764~1845)	<i>Sŏkkomunsŏ</i> 石鼓文序	<i>Shiguwen</i> 石鼓文
Hong Kyŏngmo 洪敬謨	<i>Imjang Josŏkkoga</i> 臨張照石鼓歌	<i>Shiguwen</i> 石鼓文

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(1774~1851)	<i>Chusŏkkomun Gubon</i> 周石鼓文舊本	<i>Shiguwen</i> 石鼓文
	<i>Sŏkkowŏn sinpŏn</i> 石鼓文新本	<i>Shiguwen</i> 石鼓文
Yang Chinyŏng 梁進永 (1788~1860)	<i>Sŏ Korup 'ip'anhu</i> 書峴嶼碑板後	<i>Shenyubei</i> 神禹碑
Han Unsŏng 韓運聖	<i>Kyŏngsŏ Uchŏn hu</i> 敬書禹篆後, <i>Chŏng Im Myŏngno</i> , 贈任明老	<i>Shenyubei</i> 神禹碑

As seen in the table above, Chosŏn literati left over twenty-one pieces—colophons, identifications, and prefaces—concerning epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts. Before the eighteenth century, they primarily commented on the *Shiguwen*, *Shenyubei*, and *Yishanbei*. It appears that Chosŏn literati maintained sustained interest in these so-called Xia, Zhou, and Qin ancient script rubbings (with seven colophons on the *Shenyubei*, eight on the *Shiguwen*, and seven on the *Yishanbei*). Therefore, the present study analyzes primarily the colophons on the *Shiguwen*, *Shenyubei*, and *Yishanbei*, in order to examine how Chosŏn literati perceived these works from a philological perspective.

As noted above, literati of Korea were already familiar with the stones drums 石鼓 through literary records and poetic writings dating back to the Koryŏ period. The stones drums, which Kang Youwei 康有爲 (1858–1927) referred to as the *Zhonghua Diyiguwu* 中華第一古物 “First Antiquity of China”, were unearthed in 627 in Chencangshan 陳倉山, located in Fengxiangfu 鳳翔府, and were therefore sometimes referred to as the Chencang Stone Drums 陳倉石鼓. In 1052, Xiang Zhuanshi 向傳師 acquired one of the drums from among the people and, in 1108, transferred it from Jingzhao 京兆 to Bianjing 汴京. In 1127, Jurchens 女眞 placed it in the residence of Wang Xuanwu 汪宣武, and it was later moved to the Daxing fuxue 大興府學.

During the Yuan dynasty, when Yu Ji 虞集 (1272–1348) was serving as a professor at the Dadu Jiaoshou 大都教授, the drums were again excavated from the mud and placed in front of the Dachengmen 大成門 of the Guoxue 國學. In 1339, Pan Di 潘迪 carved an annotated version (*Yinxunwen* 音訓文) of the text onto stone, erecting an Annotated Stele” 音訓碑 beside the stones drums. In 1790, the Emperor Qianlong 乾隆 (1736–1795) of the Qing dynasty had replicas made of the stones drums and arranged them alongside the originals in front of the Dachengmen.<sup>23</sup> From 1339 to 1790, drums 1 through 5 were placed on the east

<sup>23</sup> The specific arrangement of the stone drums at Dachengmen of the Confucius Temple in Beijing is recorded in the *Qinding quozhi jianzhi* 欽定國子監志 as follows: “The first through fifth stone drums are all placed east of the Dachengmen, facing west, while the sixth through tenth Stone Drums are placed west of the Dachengmen, facing east. Subsequently, the *Shiguwen yinxun bei* 石鼓文音訓碑 was installed alongside the sixth through tenth stone drums on the western side inside the Dachengmen of the Confucius Temple.”

side of the Dachengmen, while drums 6 through 10 and the annotated stele were located on the west side. In 1790, a railing was installed outside the building to protect the original drums, and the replicas were placed alongside them.

The complete set of Stone Drums consists of ten individual stones, each inscribed with the *Shiguwen* text. These texts record episodes related to fishing and hunting. Each drum is named after the first two characters of the text it bears: Wuche 吾車, Qianyi 汧戩, Tianche 田車, Luanshe 鑾車, Lingyu 霽雨, Zuoyuan 作原, Ershi 而師, Majian 馬薦, Wushui 吾水, and Wuren 吳人.



Rubbing of the *Shiguwen*, National Museum of World Writing Systems

The *Shiguwen*, China's earliest known stone-inscribed poetic text, attracted the attention of many scholars beginning in the Ming and Qing periods. In the case of Chosŏn, judging from the writings of Kim Sishŭp, rubbings of the *Shiguwen* appear to have been introduced as early as the fifteenth century. During envoys to Beijing from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, Chosŏn envoys either made direct impressions of the *Shiguwen*'s script or purchased rubbings, resulting in their substantial importation. In other words, while knowledge of the stones drums was widespread in the late Koryŏ period through epigraphic texts and works such as Han Yu's *Shigu ge* 石鼓歌, in the late Chosŏn period this abstract understanding became materially concrete through envoy encounters.

“At the Temple Gate 廟門, ten stone drums were lined up in two rows, five on each side. After passing through the Dong Wu 東廡 and Xi Wu 西廡, we entered the Temple Gate and finally viewed the so-called stone drums, which were said to be from the reign of King Xuan. The surface of the stone was fractured and eroded, and the text was barely distinguishable. The script was Zhouwen 籀文, and its form resembled modern seal script, making it difficult to decipher. The phrase, ‘The coral branches intertwine, and the limbs of trees bend thickly, like dragons and serpents darting about,’ was no exaggeration. ... We touched them with our hands and sighed, as if witnessing with our own eyes

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the grand ritual of a royal hunt held long ago at Mount Qi 岐山. We were overwhelmed by an ineffable sense of awe from across the ages.”<sup>24</sup>

Hŏ Pong 許筠 (1551–1588), who served as *Sŏngjŏlsa* 聖節使's Sŏjanggwan, visited the Ming capital in 1574 and toured both the Guozijian 國子監 and the stones drums. According to his record, all ten drums were preserved, five standing on each side of the Temple of the Former Master 先師廟. The script on the drums was zhouwen. Han Yu had long ago described the visual effect of the *Shiguwen* in his *Shigu ge*, writing:

“How could they escape erosion over long years? With sharp blades they were carved like living dragons and crocodiles. Phoenixes soared and immortals descended; coral and jade-wood branches entangled each other.”<sup>25</sup> Hŏ Pong also quoted these lines to convey the power and beauty of the *Shiguwen*. While most scholars limited themselves to textual criticism or structural assessment of strokes and composition, Hŏ Pong went beyond this by touching the drums himself and expressing a deeply emotional response.

Pak Chiwŏn 朴趾源 (1737–1805), too, during his 1780 envoy, visited historical sites such as the Shuntian Fuxue 順天府學, the Wen Tianxiangci 文天祥祠, and the Taixue 太學, and wrote that none compared to the stones drums in significance. For Pak Chiwŏn, however, the value of the stones drums was not solely historical or cultural. At the age of eighteen, he first encountered Han Yu's *Shigu ge* and was captivated by its extraordinary prose. Yet he deeply regretted not having seen the full text of the stone drums himself. To such a person, the opportunity to touch the stones drums and read Pan Di's annotated stele in person was an exceptional stroke of fortune.<sup>26</sup>

However, taken as a whole, the literati of Chosŏn were less concerned with simply appreciating the aesthetic qualities of the stones drums than with deciphering the *Shiguwen* from a philological perspective.

Originally, the drums were found in the fields of Chencang and moved by Zheng Yuqing 鄭餘慶 (746–821) of the Tang dynasty to the Confucius Shrine in Fengxiang xian 鳳翔縣, during which time one of the ten drums was lost. In

<sup>24</sup> Hŏ Pong, the daily record of the 20th day of August in *Choch'ŏn'gi* 朝天記. “廟門列石鼓十枚, 左右各五, 余等巡東西廡訖, 又赴廟門以觀所謂石鼓者, 此即周宣王時舊物也. 石理剝落橫缺, 字僅可辨, 乃古籀文也. 其字形類今小篆, 而難以了了, 所謂珊瑚交枝柯, 及鬱屈蛟蛇走者, 誠非虛語也. .... 余等摩挲歎息, 宛然若目覩岐山大蒐之盛禮, 不勝有千古無窮之感.”

<sup>25</sup> The *Shigu ge* is a seven-character ancient-style poem composed by Han Yu in 811. In this poem, Han Yu discusses the origins of the stone drums and emphasizes their cultural and historical value, urging the Tang court of his time to recognize their significance. Han Yu narrates the discovery of the stone drums, expresses regret over their prolonged neglect, and passionately proposes that the newly recovered stone drums be installed and carefully preserved at the Taixue 太學. This poem, recognized as the quintessential literary work on the theme of the stone drums, was widely known not only in China but also in Korea.

<sup>26</sup> Pak Chiwŏn, *Yŏrhailgi Alsŏngt'oesul* 熱河日記·謁聖退述, in *Yŏnamjip* 燕巖集 vol 15. “蓋古蹟之最奇者, 無如石鼓. 余年十八, 始讀昌黎東坡石鼓歌, 奇其文辭, 獨未見石鼓全文爲恨. 今手撫石鼓, 口讀潘廸音訓碑, 豈非外國人厚幸也歟.”

the fourth year of the Huangyou 皇祐 (1052) of the Song dynasty, Xiang Zhuanshi 向傳師 recovered one from the public, thus completing the set of ten. In the second year of the Daguan 大觀 (1108), the drums were moved from Jingzhao 京兆 to Bianjing 汴京, first placed in the Biyong 辟雍, and later transferred to the Baohuadian 保和殿, where the characters were filled with gold. In the second year of the Jingkang 靖康 (1127), the Jurchens took the drums to Yanjing, removed the gold, and stored them in the home of Wang Xuanwu before transferring them to the Daxing fuxue . In the eleventh year of the Dade 大德 (1307) under the Yuan dynasty, Yu Ji, then a professor at Dadu 大都, found the drums buried in mud.<sup>27</sup>

Yu Ji recorded the following during the Dade era of the Yuan: "Zheng Yuqing of the Tang first discovered them in the fields of Chencang and placed them in the Fengxiang fuxue. During the Song's Daguan period, they were moved to the Taixue of Bianjing, where the characters were filled with gold. At the end of the Jingkang era, the Jin people took them to Yan and removed the gold. They were brought here during Yu Ji's time."<sup>28</sup>

The stones drums are approximately two ch'ök 尺 in height and slightly over one ch'ök in diameter. There are ten drums in total, shaped like barrel drums with domed tops. Around each drum is inscribed a hunting poem attributed to King Xuan, using seal characters by Shi Zhou. In ancient times, the drums were located in the fields of Chencang, with only eight surviving. They were moved by Zheng Yuqing to the Confucius Temple in Fengxiang; then, during the Huangyou reign of Emperor Renzong 仁宗 (1022–1063) of the Song, Xiang Fushi found the remaining two among the people, thereby completing the set. Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (1082–1135) moved them to the Biyong and filled the inscriptions with melted gold, later placing them in the Baohuadian. During the Jingkang Incident 靖康之變, the Jin took them to Yanjing and scraped off the gold. In the Yuan dynasty's Huangqing 皇慶 (1312–1314), Yu Ji, then serving as a professor at Dadu, placed them within the gate of the Confucian temple.<sup>29</sup>

According to records from *Yōnhaengnok* 燕行錄, Chosŏn literati who visited Yanjing in the late Chosŏn period and viewed the stones drums did more than describe their physical features and condition—they also traced their transmission and demonstrated a generalized philological awareness. Moreover, their records of the drums' transmission often appear remarkably similar. This phenomenon can be

<sup>27</sup> Pak Saho, *Sōkkobyōn* 石鼓辨, in *Shimjōn'go* 心田稿 vol 2. “初在陳倉野中，唐鄭餘慶遷置鳳翔縣夫子廟，而亡其一。宋皇祐四年，向傳師得之於民間，十鼓乃全。大觀二年，自京兆徙汴京，初置辟雍，後移保和殿，以金填字。靖康二年，金人取歸燕，剝其金，置汪宣武第，後徙置大興府學。元大德十一年，虞集爲大都教授，得之泥土中。”

<sup>28</sup> Hong Taeyong, *Yōn'gi-T'aehak* 燕記·太學, in *Tamhōnsō* 湛軒書. “元大德中虞集記事，唐鄭餘慶始得于陳倉野中，置鳳翔縣學。至宋大觀中，移置汴京太學，填字以金。靖康末，金人移于燕，剝取其金。至虞集，始移置于此云。皇慶初，移置于此。”

<sup>29</sup> Sō Hosu, *Yōnhaenggi* 燕行記 vol 3. “按石鼓高二尺，徑一尺有奇，其數十，其形如鼓而頂穹隆，刻周宣王獵詩于鼓圍，史籀之篆也。舊在陳倉野中，僅存其八，唐鄭餘慶，遷之鳳翔孔子廟。宋仁宗皇祐中，向傳師得其二於民間，十鼓始足。徽宗又徙之辟雍，鑄金填其文，復移置寶和殿。靖康之亂，金人取歸燕，剝其金。元皇慶中，虞集爲大都教授，置之文廟戟門內。”



explained in two ways: first, Chosŏn literati regularly consulted their predecessors' writings when composing their own envoy journals, making some repetition inevitable; second, they frequently cited content directly from widely circulated works among diplomatic envoys, such as the *Daxing xianzhi* 大興縣志 and the *Dijing jingwu lue* 帝京景物略, naturally resulting in high textual overlap.

Traditionally, it was said that these drums were hunting steles carved under King Xuan of Zhou, with the inscriptions praising the Son of Heaven's hunts and the calligraphy attributed to the Grand Historian Shi Zhou 太史 史籀. In Jiang Shi's 江式 *Lunshu biao* 論書表, it is written: "Shi Zhou authored fifteen chapters of large seal script, which was similar to yet distinct from the ancient script of Cang Jie 倉頡. People of the time called it Zhoushu 籀, also known as 'Shi's script' 史書." In Zhang Huaiguan's 張懷瓘 *Shu duan* 書斷, it is said: "Zhouwen 籀文 was created by the Grand Historian of Zhou, and its form is preserved in the *Shiguwen*."

In the Pukchae birok 復齋碑錄, we find: "The stones drums were originally located in the fields of Chencang, and during the Tang dynasty, Zheng Yuqing moved them to the Confucius temple in Fengxiang. They were later lost during the wars of the Five Dynasties. Sima Chi 司馬池 (980–1041) of the Northern Song reinstalled them at the Fengxiang fuxue, but one was missing. During the Huangyou reign, Xiang Fushi recovered it. In the Daguan era, they were transferred to Bianjing and placed in the Baohuadian. During the Jingkang Incident 靖康之變, their whereabouts were again lost." *Daxing xianzhi* records: "In the second year of Jingkang, the Jin took them to Yanjing, removed the gold, and placed them in the Daxing fuxue. In the eleventh year of the Yuan's Dade era, Yu Ji found them in a field and first moved them to the Guoxue 國學." They survived through the Ming and remain preserved today. During the Qin, Han, Wei, and Jin periods, the drums were virtually unknown. Not until the Later Zhou 後周 did Su Xu 蘇勛 first record them. In the early Tang, Yu Shinan 虞世南 (558–638), Chu Suiliang 褚遂良 (597–658), and Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 (557–641) all praised their exquisite brushwork. Wei Suzhou 韋蘇州 (737–792), Han Changli 韓昌黎 (768–842), and Su Zizhan 蘇子瞻 (1037–1101) composed rhapsodies in their honor. Huang Shangu 黃山谷 (1045–1105) remarked that their calligraphy had the transcendence of jade tablets 珪璋 and could not have been forged by later generations. Thus, lovers of antiquity always held the stones drums in the highest esteem. The *Yishanbei* and the *Zuchuwen* 詛楚文 were likewise considered astral remnants of Xi'e 羲娥. Later scholars such as Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104–1162), Shi Su 施宿, Xue Shangong 薛尚功, Wang Houzhi, and Pan Di corrected errors, provided phonetic annotations, and conducted philological studies that led the *Shiguwen* to become widely known throughout the world.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> I Kichi, *Sökkoch'öpsö* 石鼓帖序, in *Iramjip* 一菴集 vol 2. "舊傳此鼓, 周宣王時獵碣也, 其詞頌天子之田, 其文太史史籀所書. 江式論書表曰, 史籀著大篆十五篇, 與倉頡古文, 或同或異, 時人謂之籀書, 亦曰史書. 張懷瓘書斷曰, 籀文者, 周太史之所作, 其蹟有石鼓文存焉. 復齋碑錄言, 石鼓初在陳倉野中, 唐鄭餘慶遷之鳳翔夫子廟, 五代之亂, 又復散失. 宋

Concerning the *Shiguwen*, unlike other Chosŏn literati who either copied previous records verbatim or directly cited the originals, I Kichi 李器之 (1690–1722) synthesized chronological documentation of the stones drums and meticulously traced their transmission history. In the preface of epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts 石鼓帖序, Yi cited such works as *Lunshubiao* 論書表<sup>31</sup> by Jiang Shi 江式, *Shuanduan* 書斷 by Zhang Huai'guan 張懷瓘, *Fuzhaibilu* 復齋碑錄 by Wang Houzhi 王厚之, and *Daxing xianzhi* 大興縣志. Through these sources, he examined the evolution of scholarly perception of the stones drums among scholars from the Southern and Northern Dynasties to the Tang and Southern Song periods, while also verifying the epigraphic nature and transmission of the texts. All of these sources—including *Lunshubiao*, *Shuanduan*, *Fuzhaibilu*, and Huang Tingjian's commentary—are recorded in the *Rixiyouwenkao* 日下舊聞考, from which it may be inferred that Yi relied primarily on this work for tracing the history of the *Shiguwen*. Yet Yi did not indiscriminately transcribe all textual data; instead, he selectively extracted representative materials from among many sources. This allowed for a systematic reconstruction of the transmission process and a chronological examination of the shifts in perception regarding the stones drums. Moreover, the preface of epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts demonstrates that Chosŏn literati did not rely solely on specialized treatises on epigraphy 金石學 but also actively engaged with encyclopedic compendia such as *Rixiyouwenkao* and *Didu jingwulüe* 帝都景物略.

Chosŏn literati not only incorporated such transmission records but also applied textual criticism to the contents and structure of the *Shiguwen*. Sŏ Yuku, for instance, questioned a phrase in the version of the *Shiguwen* amplified by Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488–1559)—specifically, the line “I came from the East”—arguing that it conflicted with the actual geography of Qiyang 岐陽 and Haojing 鎬京. He further criticized Yang for forcibly expanding the text by adding a character to each line.<sup>32</sup> Most notably, Sŏ challenged the established claim that Li Dongyang 李東陽 (1447–1516) had transmitted the contemporary rubbing of the *Shiguwen* to Yang.

司馬池復輦置鳳翔府學而亡其一，皇祐間向傅師搜訪而足之，大觀中歸于汴京，以金填其文，置保和殿。靖康之變，失其所在。大興縣誌言，靖康二年，金人輦至燕京，剔取其金，置大興府學。元大德十一年，虞集得之泥草中，始移國學，歷皇明至今猶存。蓋秦漢魏晉之際，鼓無聞焉，至後周，蘇勛始記其事，唐初虞褚歐陽，皆稱筆法之神妙。韋蘇州，韓昌黎，蘇子瞻，併歌詠之，黃山谷言筆法如珪璋特達，非後人所能贗作。於是乎好古者，靡不以石鼓稱首。嶧山碑詛楚文，亦羲娥之星宿耳，其後鄭樵，施宿，薛尚功，王厚之，潘迪輩，校讎訛誤，考證音訓，而石鼓之文，大行于世。”

<sup>31</sup> Yu Minzhong et al., *Guanshuba* 官署八, in *Rixiyouwenkao* 日下舊聞考 vol 69. “江式論書表，原周宣王太史籀，循科斗之書，採蒼頡古文，綜其遺美，別署新意，號曰籀文。書旨述原史書者，周宣王太史籀所作之書也，凡五十五篇，可以教童幼。”

<sup>32</sup> Sŏ Yuku, *Sŏkkomunsŏ* 石鼓文序, in *P'ungsŏkkohyŏpchip* vol 1. “第五鼓有我來自東靈雨奔流之文，夫車攻詩所謂駕言自東東有甫草者，以其時狩于東也，若岐陽則在鎬京之西，豈可云我來自東乎？第六鼓民間窪以爲臼，文益漫漶，今以他鼓較之，每行多者七字少者六字，此鼓則行僅四字，上皆缺二三字，而用修逐行增一字，強之成文。”

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As for the *Shenyubei*, the original stele was located on the Nanyue 南嶽 range of Hengshan 衡山, though the original no longer survives. A recarved version now stands at the northern peak of Yuelushan 嶽麓山. Composed in tadpole script 蝌蚪文, it contains 77 characters celebrating Yu the Great's flood-control achievements.



Rubbing of the *Shenyubei*  
(National Museum of World Writing Systems)



Yuwangbei of Yuelu Shan  
(Hunan Sheng, Changsha Shi)

Liu Xian 劉顯 of the Liang dynasty documented in the *Cuijilu* 粹機錄 the discovery of the *Shenyubei*: a recluse named Cheng Yi 成翳 encountered the stele while wandering Hengyue 衡嶽. When he submitted a copy to the king, it was considered a national treasure, and a proper stone was chosen for recarving. From then on, the *Shenyubei* came into public knowledge.<sup>33</sup> Nanyue was also called Gouloushan 岫嶺山, and during the Wei-Jin to Sui-Tang periods, these names were often interchangeable. Thus, the *Shenyubei* was also known as the *Gouloubei* 岫嶺碑. From the Southern Qi period of the Southern Dynasties onward, the *Shenyubei* gradually came to light. Han Yu 韓愈 of the Tang dynasty once journeyed to Gouloushan in search of the stele but failed to locate it, later composing the poem *Gouloushan* 岫嶺山. Likewise, Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫 (772–842) wrote of the stele in his literary works, while Zhang Shi 張栻 (1133–1180) and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) also sought the stele in vain, casting doubt on its very existence.<sup>34</sup> During the Jiajing 嘉靖 (1521–1567) of the Ming dynasty, the *Shenyubei* at Yuelushan resurfaced. Scholars immediately turned their attention to the stele, seeking to authenticate it and interpret its inscriptions. Yang Shen was

<sup>33</sup> Liu Xian, *Swaegirok* 粹機錄. “蕭齊高祖子鐔封桂陽王, 有山人成翳遊衡嶽, 得禹碑. 摹而獻之, 王寶之, 爰采佳石翻刻, 始見於世.”

<sup>34</sup> Wangxianhu, “Yubei kao” 禹碑考, *Meishu daguan* 美術大觀 vol 6 (2022): 57-58..

the first to attempt a decipherment, followed by Shen Yi 沈鎰 (1025–1067) and Yang Shih-ch'iao 楊時喬 (1531–1609), who also engaged in interpretive work.

The time at which the *Shenyu bei* was introduced into Chosŏn is not documented in historical sources. However, considering that this stele became widely known beginning in the Ming dynasty and began to draw serious scholarly attention from that period, it can be inferred that rubbings of the stele were likely introduced into Chosŏn during the sixteenth or seventeenth century. According to extant records, the earliest known individual to have encountered the *Shenyu bei* may have been Yun Hyu 尹鑄 (1617–1680).<sup>35</sup> In Yun Hyu's collected writings, *Paekhojip* 白湖集, there appears a poem titled *Chagubiga hyohanmun'gong sŏkkogach'e* 作禹碑歌 效韓文公石鼓歌體, which was composed in 1659 when Yun Hyu happened upon a rubbing of the *Shenyu bei* and was inspired to write verse.

Who was it that brought this rubbing to our eastern land?  
 I was both delighted and astonished upon receiving it.  
 Seventy-seven characters, like writhing dragons and horned serpents,  
 Soaring and leaping—suspended as if among the stars of Ji and Di.  
 Could it be the very turtle that emerged from the Luo River bearing the charts  
 of divination?  
 Or the dark jade tablet unearthed from a tomb long hidden?  
 誰將拓本流東土  
 我況得之欣以駭  
 七十七字龍螭虬  
 龍騰武躍懸箕氏

<sup>35</sup> Pak Hyŏn-gyu (2018) argues, based on Hŏ Kyun's *Pyŏngo kihaeng* 丙午紀行, that the *Hengshan shike tie* 衡山石刻帖 which was introduced to Chosŏn in 1606 by Zhu Zhifan 朱之蕃 (1558–1624) and Liang Younian 梁有年 during their diplomatic envoy from Ming, represented the first introduction of rubbings from the *Goulou bei* 岫嶼碑 into Korea. Pak consequently speculates that Hŏ Kyun, then Vice Director of the Bureau of State Guest Ritual 禮賓副正, might have been the first Korean scholar to encounter rubbings of the *Shenyubei* (神禹碑, Divine Yu Inscription). However, the *Shenyubei* at Mount Yuelu 嶽麓山, Hengshan, was engraved and erected only in 1606. Hence, the *Hengshan shike tie* mentioned by Hŏ Kyun cannot plausibly refer to rubbings of the *Shenyubei*. Moreover, in Hŏ Kyun's own text, *Chesŏkkak chegyŏnghu* 題石刻諸經後, he explicitly states that he received stone-engraved rubbings from Zhu Zhifan, specifically of scriptures such as the *Yanyinfu* 雁陰符, *Huangting* 黃庭, *Dingguan* 定觀, *Xinyin* 心印, *Qingjing* 清靜, *Taixi* 胎息, and *Donggu* 洞古, engraved by Wen Zhengming. Hŏ Kyun expressed that he cherished these rubbings so deeply that he was reluctant to put them down. This record clarifies that the *Hengshan shike tie* referenced in the *Pyŏngo kihaeng* was not a rubbing of the *Shenyubei*, but rather stone inscriptions by Wen Zhengming. On the other hand, Yun Hyu 尹鑄, in his *Chagubiga hyohanmun'gong sŏkkogach'e* 作禹碑歌, 效韓文公石鼓歌體, clearly stated that he had personally viewed rubbings of the *Shenyubei*. Based on this, the author hypothesizes that Yun Hyu was likely the first Korean scholar to encounter rubbings of the *Shenyubei*. Pak Hyŏnkyu, “Han'gugesŏi kurubi kŭmsŏkyujŏn'gwa pyŏniyangsang” 한국에서의 岫嶼碑 金石流傳과 變異樣相, *Chungguk'angnonch'ong* 57 (2018): 45; Yun Hyu, *Chagubiga, hyohanmun'gongsŏkkogach'e* 作禹碑歌, 效韓文公石鼓歌體, *Paekhojip* 白湖集 vol. 2. “誰將拓本流東土, 我況得之欣以駭, 七十七字龍螭虬, 龍騰武躍懸箕氏, 一似龜疇出清洛, 更訝玄圭發幽瘞.”



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一似龜疇出清洛  
更訝玄圭發幽瘞<sup>36</sup>

Yun Hyu first elaborated through verse upon historical anecdotes: Yao 堯 became an emperor; Yi 羿 defeated fierce beasts; and when the great flood broke out, Yu 禹 controlled the waters. Then he proceeded to describe *Shenyubei*, which records the achievements of Yu's water management. As seen in the poem, Yun Hyu, upon acquiring a rubbing of *Shenyubei* in 1659, was astonished by characters shaped like Ch'iryong 螭龍, Kyuryong 虯龍. Upon viewing these characters, he was reminded of the nine principles carved on the patterned shell of the divine turtle that emerged from the Luo River 洛水, and of the mysterious jade disk excavated from ancient tombs. Rather than decoding *Shenyubei* from a philological standpoint, Yun Hyu expressed his antiquarian interests and his admiration for the artifact through poetry. Most significantly, the poem confirms that a rubbing of *Shenyubei* had already been introduced to Chosŏn by 1659.

The earliest known account of how *Shenyubei* was brought to Chosŏn appears in the *Nangsŏn'gun kyemyo yŏnhaengnok* 朗善君癸卯燕行錄 by Yi U. As previously discussed, Yi U was fond of literary and pictorial works and took every opportunity during diplomatic envoys to acquire the writings and artworks of ancient masters. During his third envoy to Beijing in 1663, he reportedly purchased two copies of *Guzhuan Shenyubei* 古篆神禹碑 from Wang Yi 王怡 in the Fengrun 豐潤 region.<sup>37</sup> Upon returning to Chosŏn with the rubbings, Yi U sought to decipher the inscriptions and thus sent the rubbings to Hŏ Mok, a contemporary scholar of ancient script studies.

On the fifteenth day of January, it snowed heavily again. While I was staying at Hengshan 橫山, Lord Nangsŏn (Yi U) returned from his diplomatic mission and sent me the *Shenyubei* from Hengshan. The script was extremely peculiar—unlike bird-track or ancient script styles. Apocryphal histories say that the Xia sovereign devised a script resembling seal script, and this must be it. Compared to *Shiguwen*, it is even more archaic and difficult to interpret. The sage lived over 3,700 years ago, and the stele had long disappeared from the world. It was unearthed from the earth of Hengshan during the Ming Jiajing 嘉靖. The Minister of Rites, Zhan Ruoshui 湛若水 (1466–1560), appended an explanatory postscript to the inscription.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Yun Hyu, *Chagubiga, hyohanmun'gongsŏkkogach'e* 作禹碑歌, 效韓文公石鼓歌體, *Paekhojip* 白湖集 vol 2.

<sup>37</sup> Yi U, the daily record of the 10th day of August in *Nangsŏn'gun gyemyoyŏn'gyŏngnok* 朗善君癸卯燕京錄. “王怡來納班硯, 買得古篆神禹碑二帖, 懷素千文集古帖.”

<sup>38</sup> Hŏ Mok, *Kapchin'gihaeng* 甲辰記行, in *Kiyŏn* 記言·*Pyŏlchip* 別集 vol 15. “戊寅, 又大雪, 在橫山. 朗善公子使還遺我衡山神禹碑, 其書甚奇, 與鳥跡古文, 又不同. 稗史云, 夏后氏作形似篆是耶, 比之石鼓文, 尤蒼古難知. 聖人之跡, 至今三千七百有餘年, 碑沒於世久矣. 嘉靖中, 出於衡山岳麓地中, 南禮部湛若水誌之.”



Hō Mok recorded these impressions on January 15, 1664, upon receiving a rubbing of *Shenyubei* from Yi U. He wrote: "The characters are exceedingly peculiar and differ from bird-track and ancient script styles. It must be what the Xia sovereign devised as resembling seal script." His letter also reveals the provenance of the rubbing. According to his note, Zhan Ruoshui added a commentary on the reverse side of the rubbing, confirming that the copy was of the stele erected at Ganquan shuyuan 甘泉書院. The copy of *Shenyubei* acquired by Yi U was thus a rubbing of the stele established at Ganquan shuyuan during the Ming Jiajing, with Zhan Ruoshui's postscript, *Shuganquan zishan shuyuan fanke Shenyubei hou* 書甘泉子山書院翻刻神禹碑後, affixed to the reverse.<sup>39</sup>

The year after this old man returned from the East Sea, the royal descendant Lord Nangson sent me the *Shenyubei* from Hengshan. The script seems to imitate the harmonies of heaven and earth—like birds soaring high, beasts darting swiftly, dragons ascending to the heavens, and tigers moving with ferocity. It gleams resplendently with sacred and auspicious forms that no brush could imitate. It does not resemble the script of Fu Xi 伏羲 or the Huangdi 黃帝.

Ancient records state that the Xia sovereign devised the character that resembles zhuan 篆. During the height of the flood, when humans, animals, and spirits intermingled chaotically, King Yu broke through mountains to channel the waters into the sea and carved out the Nine Provinces. He marked the high mountains and great rivers, casting bronze tripods with monstrous images to reveal dangerous creatures. Observing these, people could avoid threats and live peacefully. At that time, he received the auspicious Luo River writing and expounded the Nine Principles of Hongfan jiuchou 洪範九疇. Transforming the scripts of bird-tracks and Jiahua 嘉禾, he inscribed them onto a stele erected at Hengshan—this too was a pictographic writing... The Xia sovereign, upon taming the waters and lands, created these characters based on pictorial forms. These script forms are strange yet upright and majestic without being disorderly. The *Shiji* 史記 says: "King Yu's body was the standard; his voice, the pitch; his left hand, the compass; his right hand, the square." His script too embodies compass and square.<sup>40</sup>

The philological achievement of *Shenyubei* 神禹碑 by Hō Mok can be confirmed through this postscript. First, he characterized the script of *Shenyubei* using metaphorical language, describing it as resembling birds soaring high, wild

<sup>39</sup> Zhan Ruoshui, *Quanweng daquanji* 泉翁大全集 vol 33. "門下太學生新會容璫, 孝感之士也, 見而悅焉, 因請精蹋而翻刻之, 合二碑爲一幅, 置於維甘泉山書院仰宸樓下之中堂, 使來學者得共觀焉。"

<sup>40</sup> Hō Mok, *Hyōngsan Shinubibal* 衡山神禹碑跋, in *Kiyōn* 記言 vol 6. "老人從東海歸, 明年王孫朗善君, 寄示衡山神禹碑. 其文侔天地造化, 若鳥翔, 若獸踰, 若龍騰虎變, 靈祥殊狀, 炳耀威神, 殆非筆力可摹者, 與伏羲黃帝書不同. 誌曰, 夏后氏作形似篆, 洪水方割, 人禽鬼神之居相混. 禹鑿山注海, 開九州, 奠高山大川, 像物鑄鼎, 姦怪畢見, 人得遠害而宅土. 於是得洛書之瑞, 紘九疇, 變鳥跡嘉禾, 刻石衡山, 亦像物之文也. .... 夏后氏水土既平, 像物制書, 其書奇而正, 嚴而不亂. 史記曰, 禹身爲度, 聲爲律, 左準繩, 右規矩, 其文亦有規矩有準繩。"

beasts darting swiftly, dragons ascending into the sky, and tigers transforming in motion. He then developed a reasoned argument based on existing theories about *Shenyubei* and the chapters *Yugong* 禹貢 and *Hongfan* 洪範 in the *Shujing* 書經.<sup>41</sup> As was commonly accepted by earlier scholars,<sup>42</sup> Hō Mok also argued that *Shenyubei* was associated with the ancient tale of Great Yu's flood control. He elaborated on Yu's merits by referring to records in *Yugong* of the *Shujing* and in the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳, explaining the historical context in which *Shenyubei* was erected. Although the relationship between *Shenyubei* and *Yugong* is explicitly noted in the postscript by Zhan Ruoshui, the connection between the construction of *Shenyubei* and the tradition in the Xia dynasty of casting great tripods and engraving various shaped objects had not previously been clarified. According to the third year of Duke Xuan in the *Zuo zhuan*, "In ancient times, when the virtue of the Xia dynasty flourished, distant regions were ordered to draw the forms of their peculiar things and to contribute metal to the nine provinces. Great tripods were cast, and various forms of things were engraved on them, so that the forms of all things would be contained therein, enabling the people to discern the divine from the deceitful. Hence, the people could enter rivers, lakes, mountains, and forests without encountering misfortune, and demons and monsters could not harm them".

This confirms that, as early as the Xia dynasty, information was conveyed to the people through the method of modeling things. In light of this precedent, it is possible that Yu also inscribed characters on a stele in the form of modeled things to disseminate information or record events. Subsequently, Hō Mok, based on the record from the *Hongfan* chapter of the *Shujing*—"Heaven bestowed upon Yu the *Hongfan* with its Nine Categories"—concluded that *Shenyubei* had been engraved by Yu in the form of modeled things after he had subdued the flood, by adapting the *Bird-trace script* 鳥跡書 and *Jiahe script* 嘉禾書 to inscribe the *Hongfan* he had received from Heaven.

Moreover, Hō Mok evaluated the aesthetic value of *Shenyubei*, asserting that its calligraphy was unusual, upright, and solemn, yet not disordered. Although he could not fully assess the authenticity of *Shenyubei* due to the limitations of his era, what is most significant is that he systematically verified the inscription by referencing the canonical records of the *Shujing*, *Zuo zhuan*, and prior scholarly theories, and articulated his own original viewpoint.

By the eighteenth century, with the influx of epigraphy studies, certain Chosŏn scholars began to question the authenticity of *Shenyubei*, which had previously been widely revered as the progenitor of *archaic script*. Nam Kūkkwan, for example, believed that late Song scholars had fabricated *Shenyubei* based on poems by Han Yu and Liu Yuxi. He also criticized the characters for appearing

<sup>41</sup> The opening line of the *Yugong* 禹貢 states: "Yu divided the land into Nine Provinces, dredged rivers following the mountains, and imposed tributes based upon the nature of the soil" 禹別九州, 隨山濬川, 任土作貢.

<sup>42</sup> Zhan Ruoshui, *Shuganquan zishan shuyuan fanke Shenyubei hou* 書甘泉子山書院翻刻神禹碑後. "由數說合禹貢而觀之, 則大禹由岷山導江, 歷湖入海, 過南嶽, 登祭而刻石於山, 即此碑, 無可疑者."

unnaturally twisted and bulging, thereby devaluing *Shenyubei* as of little worth.<sup>43</sup> Although Nam Kŭkkwan did not undertake a comprehensive philological verification of *Shenyubei*, what is especially notable is that, within the social context of Chosŏn where *Shenyubei* was generally venerated as the origin of archaic script, he independently raised questions about its authenticity and linguistic value. Furthermore, Sŏng Haeŭng 成海應 (1760–1839) cited the theories of Yang Shen and Gu Yanwu and discussed the origin, editions, and authenticity of *Shenyubei* from a philological perspective.

Yang Shen wrote, “Numerous renowned figures throughout history have praised and recorded the *Shenyubei* of Hengshan. However, Liu Yuxi and Han Changli never saw it, and even Zhu Xi and Zhang Shi, who traveled to Nanyue, failed to locate it. In *Yudi jisheng* 輿地紀勝 by Wang Xiangzhi, it is written: ‘The stele is located at Gouloufeng 岫嶺峯. Some say it lies at Yunmifeng 雲密峯. In the past, a woodcutter saw it, and during the Jiading 嘉定 of the Song dynasty, a scholar from Shu 蜀, guided by the woodcutter, reached the site and produced a rubbing of about seventy characters, which he engraved within Kuimen 夔門. However, the stele later disappeared. More recently, Jiwen 季文 and Zhang Qianxian 張僉憲 obtained a copy in Changsha 長沙 and identified it as the one that He Zhi 何致 had reproduced once at Yuelu Shuyuan 嶽麓書院 during the Song Jiading.’ Gu Yanwu stated: ‘Before Han Tuizhi, no one had seen this stele. It was first discovered and reproduced by He Zhi at the foot of Zhuyongfeng 祝融峯. When the magistrate of Hengshan later searched for it, the site had already been lost. The current so-called Yubei 禹碑 has characters that are mysterious but lack proper form, language that is novel but lacks coherence, and rhymes that are strange yet do not conform to antiquity. This is enough to prove that it is a forgery.’” Based on these two views, it is evident that the *Shenyubei* transmitted today is a reproduction created by He Zhi. Rangsŏn’gun, that is, Yi U, once acquired a copy of it during his journey to Beijing. The inscription included phrases such as “Sŭngjewalch’a, Ikpojwagyŏng” 承帝曰嗟, 翼輔佐卿, which clearly contradict the historical sequence outlined by Gu Tinglin 顧亭林. Could the title Kyŏng 卿 have existed during the Tang 唐 or Yu 虞 periods? One may infer much from this inconsistency.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Nam Kŭkkwan, “Tan’gŏilgi” 端居日記, in *Mongyejip* 夢巖集. “岫嶺禹碑, 宋末人因韓·劉詩偽爲也, 強作菌蠹膨亨之狀, 不成字體.”

<sup>44</sup> Sŏng Haeŭng, *Shinubibal* 神禹碑跋, in *Yŏn’gyŏngjaejŏnjip* 研經齋全集·*Sokchip* 續集 vol 16. “楊用修云, 古今名士稱述衡山禹碑者不一, 然劉禹錫·韓昌黎皆未見, 晦翁·南軒遊南嶽, 尋訪不獲. 王象之輿地紀勝云, 碑在岫嶺峯, 又傳在雲密峯, 昔樵人見之. 宋嘉定中, 蜀士引樵夫, 至其所, 以紙打碑七十餘字, 刻于夔門觀中, 後俱亡. 近張季文僉憲, 自長沙得之云, 是宋嘉定中, 何致子一撫刻于嶽麓書院者. 顧亭林云, 自韓以前, 未見此碑, 何子一始得之祝融峯下, 手摹以傳後, 及衡山令搜訪, 已迷其處. 今所稱禹碑, 字奇而不合法, 語奇而不中倫, 韻奇而不合古, 可斷其偽. 觀此兩說, 今所傳禹碑, 乃子一刻本也, 朗善君嘗之燕而得之. 其辭曰, 承帝曰嗟, 翼輔佐卿等句, 卽亭林所稱不中倫者也. 唐虞時, 何嘗有稱卿者耶, 他皆類推也.”

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While Nam Kŭkkwan judged the authenticity of the *Shenyubei* somewhat rashly and subjectively, Sŏng Haeŭng approached the matter with scholarly rigor, building upon prior research and assessing the stele's authenticity with objectivity. Sŏng Haeŭng primarily cited *Danyanlu* 丹鉛錄 by Yang Shen and *Jinshiwenziji* 金石文字記 by Gu Yanwu. Yang Shen, a renowned Ming-dynasty writer, was celebrated not only for his literary output and vast erudition, but also for his achievements in textual criticism, philology, and epigraphy. Notably, he was the first to interpret the *Shenyubei* from an epigraphic perspective, producing a detailed commentary on the inscription and composing a 700-character poem, *Yubeige* 禹碑歌, in praise of Yu's accomplishments and as a vehicle for expressing his literary insights. He also made great efforts to disseminate knowledge of the stele by establishing engraved copies across the Yunnan 雲南 area.<sup>45</sup> Thus, Yang Shen may rightly be considered both the pioneer in interpreting the *Shenyubei* and a key figure in promoting its legacy.

Sŏng Haeŭng quoted from *Danyanlu zonglu* 丹鉛錄總錄 to present various theories regarding the transmission of the *Shenyubei*, explaining how its precise location and transmission history remained unclear. He then cited the findings of Gu Yanwu, who stated that during the Northern Song Jiading 嘉定, He Zhi first discovered and transmitted the stele from beneath Zhuyongfeng. This allowed Sŏng Haeŭng to clarify both the circumstances surrounding the stele's discovery and the provenance of the extant version. Finally, drawing upon the philological conclusions of Yang Shen and Gu Yanwu, Sŏng Haeŭng presented his own interpretation. He concluded that the existing copies of the *Shenyubei* were all based on He Zhi's initial reproduction, and that the version brought to Chosŏn by Rangson'gun was one of these.

Moreover, as cited above, Gu Yanwu once criticized the *Shenyubei*, stating that "Its words are bizarre and do not conform to reason". Sŏng Haeŭng, while accepting Gu Yanwu's argument, based his reasoning on the commentary by Yang Shen. In Yang Shen's interpretation of the *Shenyubei*, the phrase "Sŏngjewalch'a, Ikpojwagyŏng" 承帝曰嗟，翼輔佐卿<sup>46</sup> appears. The term Kyŏng 卿 did not

<sup>45</sup> In 1537, Yang Shen obtained an ink rubbing of the Xia dynasty *Yuwangbei* 禹王碑, personally copied and engraved it, and erected it at the Hongshengsi 弘聖寺 in Dali 大理. Subsequently, he also erected versions of the *Yuwangbei* in other locations, including Longfengcun 龍鳳村 in Zuoyixiang 作邑鄉, Dali, and the Wenquan yandong 溫泉岩洞 in Anningxian 安寧縣. Furthermore, Yang Shen composed a poem titled *Yubei ge*, containing over seven hundred characters, personally wrote it in calligraphy, engraved it into stone, and installed it at the Hongsheng Temple in Dali. In other words, Yang Shen erected the *Yuwangbei* three times within the Yunnan 雲南 region in 1537 alone. Zhuannu, "Yangshenfuxing huaxiawenxuesixiang de wenhuajiedu-yi yu wang bei-yubeige wei li" 楊慎復興華夏文學思想的文化解讀——以禹王碑·禹碑歌為例, *Dali xueyuan xuebao* 7, vol 10 (2011): 38.

<sup>46</sup> Chengze Sun, *Gengzi xiaoxiaji* 庚子銷夏記. "釋文有三家從楊慎其沈鑑楊廷相則參註其下: 承帝曰咨【沈云嗟】翼輔佐【楊云碩】卿洲渚【沈云水處】與登鳥獸【楊云萬有】之門參身洪流【楊云一魚一池】而明發爾興久旅【沈云以此】忘家宿嶽麓庭智營形折心罔弗辰往求平定華嶽泰衡宗疏事哀勞餘仲【楊云祇神】裡麟【沈云羸】塞昏徙南瀆衍亨【沈云暴昌言】衣制食備萬國其寧【楊云宇莫】竄【楊云鼠】舞永【沈云蒸】奔."



begin to refer to government officials until the Qin and Han periods.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the use of *kyōng* in a stele purportedly established by Xia Yu 秦禹 constitutes clear evidence that the *Shenyubei*'s language lacks coherence and that the inscription is a forgery. Notably, Sōng Haeūng did not merely accept the findings of Yang Shen and Gu Yanwu passively. Instead, he verified specific phrases in the *Shenyubei* from a philological standpoint, thereby providing a critical foundation for Gu Yanwu's conclusion. By examining the inscription's transmission process, Sōng Haeūng further substantiated which version had been introduced to Chosŏn and reasonably concluded that the extant *Shenyubei* was indeed a forgery.

Furthermore, considering that both Yang Shen's and Gu Yanwu's discourses appear verbatim in the section *Xiayubei* of the *Peiwenzhai shuhuapu* 佩文齋書畫譜, it is plausible that Sōng Haeūng consulted this encyclopedic source directly rather than referencing *Danyanlu* 丹鍾錄 and *Jinshiwenziji* 金石文字記.<sup>48</sup> This also demonstrates that Chosŏn scholars, when conducting epigraphic research, often relied more on comprehensive encyclopedic compilations of theories than on single-issue treatises.

Meanwhile, as previously discussed, from the seventeenth century onward, antiquarian writers and calligraphers such as Hō Mok regarded the *Shenyubei* as the progenitor of ancient script and praised its calligraphic beauty, actively embracing it. By the eighteenth century, Chosŏn scholars began to question its authenticity, adopting a more critical approach to its discovery, transmission, and versions. Some Chosŏn calligraphers also came to devalue the calligraphic worth of the *Shenyubei*. Nam Kongch'ŏl 南公軌 (1760–1840) pointed out that the stele's characters were grotesque and must have been forged, arguing that repeated reproductions had eroded the original appearance. He remarked that “To believe entirely in the *Shujing* is no better than having no *Shujing* at all”.<sup>49</sup> Kang Sehuang 姜世晃 (1713–1791) went even further, scrutinizing the brushstrokes and line techniques. He examined the relationship between the seal script style, which had flourished in Chosŏn calligraphy at the time, and the *Shenyubei*. He harshly criticized the impact of this forged stele on Chosŏn calligraphic practice, asserting that its introduction had led to clumsy and heavy-handed habits in the study of seal script.

<sup>47</sup> *Kangxi zidian* 康熙字典. “【韻會】秦漢以來，君呼臣以卿 【正韻】君呼臣爲卿，蓋期之以卿也.”

<sup>48</sup> Sun yueban et al., *Peiwen zhaishuhuapu* 佩文齋書畫譜 vol 88. “昔樵人曾見之，自後無有見者。宋嘉定中，蜀士因樵夫引至，其所以紙打其碑，七十二字刻于夔門觀中，後俱亡。近張季文僉憲自長沙得之，云是宋嘉定中何致子一模刻于嶽麓書院者。斯文顯晦，信有神物護持哉。禹碑凡七十七字，輿地紀勝云七十二字誤也。自韓以前未見此碑，何子一始得之祝融口下，手摹以後，及衡山令搜訪，已迷其處。字奇而不合法，語奇而不中倫，韻奇而不合古，可斷其偽。”

<sup>49</sup> Nam Kong-ch'ŏl, *UP'yōngsut'och'an Sōkkōk* 禹平水土贊石刻, in *Kūmnūngjip* 金陵集 vol 23. “禹平水土贊文多怪誕，與尚書禹貢不同，又稱大禹手篆，而此尤不足貴重。柳公權曰心正則筆正，聖人之筆，奚取工妙爲哉？將以見心畫也，而歷累千載，更幾人手摸，訛誤差爽，不復彷彿。故余家有此本，旋即去之。蓋取盡信書則不如無書之義。壬寅春日。”



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“Today’s students of seal script write based solely on subjective judgment—brushstrokes go wherever they feel like, mixing regular and cursive strokes for convenience or rotting to popular tastes. Some deliberately craft bizarre or eccentric forms to deceive the ignorant and claim superiority. Such behavior is lamentable and beyond reproach.”<sup>50</sup>

There are two general styles of seal script in our country, ancient and modern. One style begins its brushstrokes with slanted tip 偏鋒 and deliberately employs war-like strokes 戰筆. Each dot 點 carries the energy of cursive script 草書, and the downward slant 撇 resembles that of standard script 楷書. It was thought to have originated from *Shenyubei*. But how can one be sure that *Shenyubei* was not a later fabrication by descendants? Moreover, when people today arbitrarily fabricate ancient script characters with modern brushstrokes, forcing them into a lavishly fluid form, they fail to escape the vulgar and inferior aesthetic.<sup>51</sup>

This criticism appears in the colophon by Kang Sehwang on the *Chenghuangbei* 城隍碑 by Li Yangbing 李陽冰. Calligraphers of Chosŏn in the late period frequently practiced *zhuan* in two forms. One combined brush strokes from standard script and cursive script, producing grotesque and exaggerated forms based on what they believed to be the *Shenyubei*. However, the *Shenyubei* may in fact be a forgery by later hands. Arbitrarily creating ancient forms using modern brushwork only perpetuates vulgar convention.

The above content is drawn from a postscript composed by Kang Sehwang regarding the *Chenghuangbei*, a stele inscribed by the famed seal script master Li Yangbing. Before offering his critique of Li Yangbing’s seal script, Kang Sehwang first assessed the stylistic tendencies of seal script within the calligraphic circles of Chosŏn. According to him, two main trends in seal script prevailed in late Chosŏn: one arose out of convenience, blending the strokes of standard script and cursive script; the other deliberately adopted bizarre and ingenious forms. Among these, seal script was said to feature twisted and curved strokes, dots that embodied the energy of cursive script, and downward slanting strokes resembling those in standard script—all of which were believed to originate from the *Shenyubei*.

While the philological focus for the *Shiguwen* and *Shenyubei* centered on textual meaning, the *Yishanbei* debate revolved around authenticity. From its earliest circulation in Chosŏn, scholars appreciated its calligraphy and adopted its style—but continually questioned its genuineness and authorship. Though the stele arrived in the 15th century, it only garnered serious scholarly attention in the 17th century—spurred by Kim Suchŏng 金壽增 (1624–1701), who reproduced it by rubbing and carving. Hŏ Mok was the first Chosŏn scholar to recognize its artistic and academic value; Kim became the prime mover in its dissemination.

<sup>50</sup> Kang Sehwang, *Chesumoiyangbingsŏnghwangbi* 題手摹李陽冰城隍碑後, in *P’yoamyugo* 豹菴稿 vol 5. “今俗學篆書者, 師心信手, 或雜楷草之點畫, 以趨便易而悅俗目, 或作詭狀異態, 以欺聾盲而高自許, 是皆可哀而不足非也。”

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.* “東俗篆書, 古今有二體. 一則偏鋒發畫, 故作戰筆, 點每帶草, 撇輒如楷, 自謂出於禹碑. 豈知禹碑是後人贗作, 況以今畫妄作古字, 強爲淋漓之態, 不離庸惡之習.”

Kim Suchŭng, whose courtesy name was Yŏn-ji 延之, was the eldest grandson of Munjeong-gong 文正公 Kim Sang-heon 金尙憲 (1570–1652). A devoted disciple of Song Siyŏl 宋時烈 (1607–1689), he was deeply learned and skilled in seal script, *zhoushu*, and eight-part script 八分體, and produced many inscriptions.<sup>52</sup> His engraved *Yishanbei* is believed to be the only Chinese seal script textbook carved and published in Chosŏn. Thus, with the *Yishanbei* reissued, Chosŏn scholars not only recognized its aesthetic merit but actively engaged in verifying and deciphering it using poems, epigraphic texts, and other historical materials.

Regarding the “Yishan Stele”—erected by Qin Shi Huang to commemorate his own achievements—the scholarly communities remained divided. Kang Sehuang suggested the lack of clear aesthetic standards in stroke form contributed to disagreements. He cited Ouyang Xiu, who wasn’t reluctant to deem even parts of the Book of Changes as spurious. If Ouyang could doubt Yijing sections, how could one fully trust his comments on this stele? Kim Suchŭng countered by engraving both sides of the discussion in the engraved edition, appending diverse opinions to aid future readers in comparative analysis—a fair and balanced approach.<sup>53</sup>

As previously discussed, Kim Suchŭng, who was deeply versed in seal script, was not only broadly learned but also was praised as being refined in character, free from even the slightest vulgarity. Thus, Song Siyŏl valued him highly, and the two maintained a teacher-friend relationship based on shared ideals. Kim Sujŭng, having early abandoned pursuit of the civil service examination, occasionally served as Suryeŏng 守令 of Sŏksŏng-hyŏn 石城縣 and P’yŏnggang hyŏn 平康縣, and established Chŏngudang 淨友堂, Kŭnminhŏn ch’ŏngsŏngdang 近民軒清省堂, Kŭnmindang 近民堂, and Sagwanjŏng 四寬亭. Song Siyŏl composed commemorative inscriptions for all these places.

In addition, Song Siyŏl took great interest in Kim Suchŭng’s calligraphy and painting and appears to have written an unusually large number of postfaces related to them. In the *Songjadaejŏn* 宋子大全, eight postfaces are preserved that he wrote in response to Kim’s calligraphy, painting, and epigraphy albums, including *Chunggak Yŏksanbibal* 重刻嶧山碑跋, *Chinjŏnch’ŏpbal* 秦篆帖跋, *Maewŏltang hwasangbal* 梅月堂畫像跋, *Ch’wisŏngdobal* 聚星圖跋, *Sŏ Kim Yŏnji sŏhu* 書金延之書後, *Sŏ Kim Yŏnji bonghwa Munjŏng sŏnsaeng si hu* 書金延之奉和文正先生詩後, *Kŭmsŏkch’ongbal* 金石叢跋, and *Kŭmsŏkch’ongbal chaepal* 金石

<sup>52</sup> The daily record of the 4th, March, sukchong 27th year, in *Sukchongshillok* 肅宗實錄 vol 35. “前參判金壽增卒，年七十八，壽增字延之，文正公 尙憲長孫也，爲人清修，無一點塵態。師友宋時烈，識趣淵懿，爲詩文，澹雅如其人，尤工於篆·籀·八分，多書公私金石。”

<sup>53</sup> Song Siyŏl, *Chunggak Yŏksanbibal* 重刻嶧山碑跋, *Songjadaejŏn* 宋子大全 vol 147. “諸家論嶧碑者，異同難齊，豈於書體，亦無正法眼藏而然歟。然以歐公之淳厚，亦於此而有真僞之說，只此一小事，而論議之參差如此，然歐公以易繫亦爲僞僞之書，則其不失於此碑之評，何保也。延之悉附諸說於碑左，蓋欲參伍錯綜，以俟後世，其意可謂公矣。”

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叢跋再跋. Through these writings, the nature of their artistic exchanges can be discerned.

Among these, *Chunggak Yŏksanbibal* and *Chinjŏnch'ŏpbal* are particularly noteworthy. In May 1672, Song Siyŏl composed a postface for the *Yishanbei*, which had been recopied by Kim Sujŏng, and especially praised Kim's inclusion of scholarly findings concerning *Yishanbei* by scholars from successive dynasties at the end of the stele text.

Whereas it was common in Chosŏn for scholars to uncritically accept the epigraphic theories of Ouyang Xiu regarding *Yishanbei*, Kim Sujŏng refrained from such blind imitation. Instead, he cited not only the views of Ouyang Xiu but also those of epigraphers such as Zhao Mingcheng 趙明誠 (1081–1129) and Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526–1590), thereby demonstrating an independent critical attitude. Accordingly, Song Siyŏl also remarked that Ouyang Xiu's opinion, despite his sincerity, should not be trusted completely, and acknowledged Kim's efforts to interpret the stele text through comparative analysis of various theories as being fair-minded.

Moreover, seemingly inspired by the scholarly views appended by Kim Suchŭng, Song Siyŏl, six months after writing *Chunggak Yŏksanbibal*, composed *Chinjŏnch'ŏpbal*, in which he presented his own critical interpretation.

Since ancient times, many scholars have discussed the *Yishanbei*. However, I believe that the statement by Du Fu 杜甫(712–770), "The wildfires burned the stele, and the transmitted script became bloated," should be regarded as the authoritative opinion. According to the analysis by Ouyang Xiu, he first said that it was slightly larger than the *Taishanbei* 泰山碑, but later claimed it was slightly smaller. Does this not suggest that the more the carved editions were transmitted, the more the original truth was lost? Now, when one looks at the carved edition reproduced by Kim Suchŭng, the lean and vigorous vitality of the calligraphy can be said to possess a spirit that communicates with the divine—could this not be a copy transmitted before the burning?

I recall that during the Qin dynasty, inscriptions were engraved even on standard weights and measures, as well as on counterweights, bronze plates, and other utensils. These were surely engraved in many places for the purpose of transmission to later generations, such was the custom of the Qin. If so, it is possible that Li Si 李斯 (280–208 BCE) created this stele with the same purpose, and even if the original *Yishanbei* disappeared, there may have been a separate transmission of an authentic version. Otherwise, how could its calligraphy, said to transcend a thousand years, still enable us to glimpse the stylistic gestures of antiquity after the Han and Jin dynasties?

Someone once said, "Even if the stele's script is lean and powerful, what if this is actually the bloated writing that Lao Du referred to? And who can say that the true original was not even leaner and more vigorous?" To this, I responded: that is a fine point. A person may be lean in the past and become plump later, but their skeletal structure and spirit do not change. Now, this seal script shows not even a hair's breadth of resemblance to anything over a thousand years before

or after. Therefore, we may truly believe that it originated with Li Si from the beginning.<sup>54</sup>

Du Fu once wrote in his *Lichao bafen xiaozhuan ge* 李潮八分小篆歌: “The Yishan Stele was burned by wildfires; the version engraved on jujube wood is bloated and has lost its truth.” Though this verse does not constitute a scholarly verification of the *Yishanbei*, its vivid imagery—“bloated and has lost its authenticity” 肥失真—left a strong impression on Chosŏn literati. Song Siyŏl also believed Du Fu’s description was the authoritative view prior to seeing the *Yishanbei*. But after observing the lean and vigorous script in Kim Sujŏng’s reproduction, he began to question the existing scholarly interpretations he had accepted.

Accordingly, Song Siyŏl examined the customs of the Qin period, noting that inscriptions were made not only on weights and measures but also widely on counterweights, bronze plates, and other utensils. Based on this, he hypothesized that Li Si created the *Yishanbei* for the purpose of transmission and that a genuine exemplar may have separately survived. He further reasoned that the script of the *Yishanbei*, which had been transmitted over a millennium, displayed no traits of Han or Jin calligraphic styles and that its character forms and visual impression had not changed at all. Based on this intuitive judgment, he concluded that the transmitted *Yishanbei* was indeed the authentic work of Li Si.

Although Song Siyŏl’s textual criticism of the *Yishanbei* may be overly subjective and lack persuasive rigor, more meaningful than a logically watertight result was his willingness to question previously accepted theories upon seeing a new carved edition and to re-examine and interpret the *Yishanbei* from a fresh perspective.

Meanwhile, unlike Song Siyŏl, who presented his own critical interpretation in an original manner, most scholars in late Chosŏn accepted the theories of epigraphy scholars such as Ouyang Xiu and Zhao Mingcheng, using historical records as their basis for philological examination of the *Yishanbei*.

I read the *Qin Shihuang benji* 秦始皇本紀, where the six inscriptions—Liangfu 梁父, Langya 琅琊, Zhifu 之罘, Dongguan 東觀, Jieshi 碣石, and Kuaiji 會稽—were all recorded. However, the inscription of the *Yishanbei* was conspicuously absent. It only states that “In the 28th year, the First Emperor ascended Mount Zou and Mount Yi 鄒嶧山, erected a stele, and discussed with Confucian scholars of the land of Lu 魯地 the engraving of the stone to praise the meritorious deeds of Qin.” I also examined the six inscriptions, and in all cases, the beginning of the rhyming section starts with the phrase “the Emperor”

<sup>54</sup> Song Siyŏl, *Chinjŏnch'ŏpbal* 秦篆帖跋, *Songjadaejŏn* 宋子大全 vol 147. “自古論嶧碑者多, 而愚竊以爲當以老杜所謂野火燒傳刻肥者, 爲正案矣。歐公所論則始謂較泰山碑差大, 而後又謂其差小, 則豈愈傳其刻而愈失其真也? 今觀金延之摹刻之本, 其瘦勁精彩, 真可以通神, 此豈未燒前傳本耶? 嘗記秦時度量上銘文, 亦刻於秦鐵稱及銅版及他器物者頗多, 蓋爲必傳之圖, 而例廣其所托者, 秦俗然也, 無亦斯之爲此碑也, 亦如是。故嶧碑雖亡, 而別有真跡傍傳耶? 不然, 何其超越千古, 絕無漢晉以後意態耶? 或者謂此雖曰瘦勁, 安知猶是老杜所謂肥者, 而其真本瘦勁有加於此耶? 曰是亦有此理, 然人有昔瘦而今肥者, 其骨格精神則未嘗變也。今此篆上下千餘載, 未嘗有毫髮近似者, 則可信其初實出於斯也。”

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皇帝 They follow such formulas as “In the twenty-sixth year” 二十有六年, “In the twenty-ninth year” 維二十九年, or “In the thirty-seventh year” 三十有七年, and so forth, forming a clear and structured pattern. Yet in the current version of the *Yishanbeiwén* 嶧山碑文 transmitted by Xu Xuan 徐鉉 (916–991), attributed to Zheng Wenbao 鄭文寶 (953–1013), the rhyme does not begin with “the Emperor” 皇帝, and the year “twenty-sixth” is written as 廿六年, which diverges from the conventions of the six inscriptions.

Du Fu once wrote in his poem *Lichao bafen xiaozhuange* 李潮八分小篆歌: “The stele of Yishan was burned by wildfires, and the copy engraved on jujube wood became bloated and lost its authenticity.” However, could wildfires truly consume a stone stele? And could a carving on jujube wood be preserved for long? It seems likely that the First Emperor merely erected a stone and discussed the inscription, but in fact, no actual engraving took place.<sup>55</sup>

Zhao Mingcheng once questioned the absence of the inscriptional text in the *Shiji · Benji* 史記·本紀, noting that although it states that in the 28th year the First Emperor of Qin ascended Mount Zou and Mount Yi and discussed the engraving of a stone with Confucian scholars of the Lu region, no panegyric was recorded, whereas the contents of the other six inscriptions were fully documented.<sup>56</sup> Starting from this doubt raised by Zhao Mingcheng, Sǒng Haeŭng conducted a meticulous investigation into the authenticity of the *Yishanbei*. Sǒng Haeŭng compared the textual style of the *Yishanbei* inscription with those of the six inscriptions listed in the *Shiji · Benji*—Liangfu, Langya, Zhifu, Dongguan, Jieshi, and Kuaiji—and concluded that the *Yishanbei* differed in literary form from those exemplars. Specifically, the six inscriptions all begin new rhyme sections with the characters “the Emperor” 皇帝, and their year notations follow the formulas “In the twenty-sixth year” 維二十六年 or “twenty-sixth year” 二十有六年. In contrast, the *Yishanbei* omits the “Emperor” at the head of new rhyme sections, and the year is written using a different notation, 廿六年.

While Zhao Mingcheng had raised doubts based on the textual record of the *Shiji*, Sǒng Haeŭng clarified the distinctions between the *Yishanbei* and the six inscriptions through close textual comparison, thereby resolving Zhao Mingcheng’s query. Additionally, Sǒng Haeŭng questioned Du Fu’s poetic lines by asking whether it was possible for a wildfire to burn a stone stele or whether an inscription carved on jujube wood could have been preserved for such a long time.

<sup>55</sup> Sǒng Haeŭng, *Cheyōksanbihu* 題嶧山碑後, in *Yōn'gyōngjaejōnjip* 研經齋全集 vol 18. “余讀秦始皇本紀, 具載梁父·琅琊·之罘·東觀·碣石·會稽等六銘, 而獨不載嶧山碑文, 只稱二十八年, 始皇上鄒嶧山立石, 與魯諸生議刻石頌秦德而已. 又考六銘, 凡易韻之際, 輒以皇帝起. 且曰二十有六年, 曰維二十六年, 曰維二十九年, 曰三十有七年, 其例若是森然也. 今徐鉉所傳鄭文寶嶧山碑文易韻處, 不以皇帝起, 二十六年作廿六年, 皆與六銘異法. 杜工部詩云嶧山之碑野火焚, 棗木傳刻肥失真, 又恠野火能燒石盡泐, 棗木傳刻, 亦豈能久乎? 始皇蓋立石議刻而已, 實未嘗刻.”

<sup>56</sup> Zhao Mingcheng, *Jinshi lu* 金石錄. “史記本紀, 二十八年始皇東行郡縣, 上鄒嶧山立石, 與魯諸儒生議刻石頌秦德, 而其頌詩不載. 其他始皇登名山, 凡六刻石, 史記皆具載其詞, 而獨遺此文, 何哉?”



## Conclusion

From a chronological perspective, it is evident that epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts 古文碑帖 began to be introduced in considerable numbers from the late sixteenth century. The interest in epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts during the late Chosŏn period stemmed from the enthusiasm for epigraphy and epigraphic compilations. By the mid-seventeenth century, with the introduction of epigraphic works such as *Jigulu* 集古錄 by Ouyang Xiu and *Jinshilu* 金石錄 by Zhao Mingcheng, scholars with antiquarian and broad antiquity-oriented dispositions actively engaged in the collection of steles and related rubbings for their antiquarian enjoyment. Thereafter, especially during the reigns of Kings Sukchong, Yŏngjo, and Chŏngjo, the reception of evidential scholarship from Qing China led to the full-scale development of epigraphic studies.

As diplomatic missions to the Qing capital brought back antiquarian materials, including epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts, Chosŏn envoys with a deep appreciation for epigraphy and calligraphy—such as *Rangsŏn’gun Yi U*—acquired works like *Shiguwen*, *Shenyubei*, and *Yishanbei*. Thus, the enthusiasm for epigraphy that had emerged from the seventeenth century came to encompass epigraphic rubbings of ancient texts as well. It is particularly noteworthy that late Chosŏn scholars did not limit themselves to merely describing these artifacts. Rather, they analyzed the characters and text structure in a philological manner, aiming to decipher their meanings.

The *Shiguwen*, known as the first stone-inscribed poem in Chinese history, attracted significant attention from scholars during the Ming and Qing dynasties. In the Chosŏn context, extant poetic records by Kim Sishŭp indicate that rubbings of the *Shiguwen* had already been introduced by the fifteenth century. From the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, Chosŏn envoys to Beijing made direct rubbings of the *Shiguwen* or acquired existing rubbings, leading to its widespread circulation. Based on diplomatic mission records, it is evident that Chosŏn literati not only described the visual features and preservation state of the *Shiguwen*, a notable monument in the Qing capital, but also examined its transmission, reflecting a general awareness of textual verification. Moreover, as Chosŏn literati tended to cite passages from encyclopedic texts that were widely circulated among envoys—such as *Rixia jiuwen kao*, *Daxing xianzhi*, and *Dijing jingwulue*—they often produced highly similar accounts.

Although the exact date of the *Shenyubei*’s entry into Chosŏn is not recorded, given that the stele was already widely known during the Ming dynasty and had become the subject of scholarly attention, it can be reasonably inferred that rubbings were introduced sometime during the sixteenth or seventeenth century. According to extant records, the earliest Chosŏn figure to encounter the *Shenyubei* may have been Yun Hyu, whose poetry confirms that the rubbing had reached Chosŏn by 1659. Additionally, the importation of the *Shenyubei* is most explicitly

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documented in *Nangsŏn'gun kyemyo yŏnhaengnok* 朗善君癸卯燕行錄 by Yi U, which notes that during the 1663 mission to Beijing, he purchased two copies of the *Guzhuan Shenyubei* from Wang Yi in the Fengrun area. Based on philological analysis, Hŏ Mok identified the version acquired by Yi U as a rubbing of the stele erected at the Ganquan Shuyuan in Yangzhou during the Jiajing of the Ming dynasty, with an appended colophon titled *Shu Ganquan Zishan shuyuan fanke Shenyubei hou* by Zhan Ruoshui.

By the eighteenth century, as epigraphic texts from Qing China began entering Chosŏn, some Chosŏn scholars began to question the authenticity of the *Shenyubei*, which had previously been regarded as the origin of ancient script forms. Nam Kŏkkwan was one of the first to raise suspicions about its genuineness and subsequently devalued its scholarly worth. Sŏng Haeŭng, synthesizing the views in *Danyanlu* by Yang Shen and *Jinshiwenziji* 金石文字記 by Gu Yanwu, concluded that all extant versions of the *Shenyubei* were based on the initial tracing by He Zhi and that the copy brought to Chosŏn by Yi U was one of these facsimiles.

Whereas analysis of the *Shiguwen* and *Shenyubei* focused on interpreting the content and verifying individual characters, in the case of the *Yishanbei*, questions of authenticity constituted the central concern. From the time of its introduction, Chosŏn literati actively appreciated the calligraphic beauty of the *Yishanbei* and adopted its style while simultaneously engaging in philological inquiry into its authorship and authenticity. Although the *Yishanbei* had already been introduced by the fifteenth century, it was not until the seventeenth century that it received significant scholarly and artistic attention in Chosŏn. This renewed interest was primarily due to the re-engraving of the stele by Kim Suchŭng. Some Chosŏn scholars reexamined the stele from a fresh perspective, while others extended existing interpretations by further deciphering its text in greater depth.

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