

Special Feature

The Emergence and Iconography of *Seosu* (Auspicious Beasts) in the Twelfth-century Goryeo Celadon

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Introduction

Produced for almost 500 years from the tenth century through the fourteenth century, celadon wares were ceramics of the Goryeo Dynasty. In the twelfth century, there were great technical developments in the shape, glaze, and decoration of Goryeo celadon in addition to considerable changes in the ware's form and design. The improvement in quality and diversification of forms in the twelfth century indicate a change in the types and social status of consumers who used celadon. These changes are especially evident in the iconography of *seosu* (auspicious beasts 瑞獸). In China, *seosu* symbolized good omens from heaven as well as a reign of prosperity and peace. Likewise, in Korea, during the Joseon Dynasty, *seosu* were considered auspicious animals that appeared when a king governed the country with benevolence, and their depiction in historical documents, architecture, sculptures, clothing, and crafts symbolized royal authority (M. Kim 2014, 151).

Among extant art of the Goryeo period, the twelfth-century celadons in particular exhibit a wide variety of *seosu*. These include the dragon, lion, *girin* (mythical unicorn 麒麟), *iryong* (hornless dragon 螭龍), *gwiryong* (turtle-dragon 龜龍), *eoryong* (fish-dragon 魚龍), sea horse, rhinoceros, *bonghwang* (a pair of mythical birds 鳳凰), *nansae* (mythical bird 鸞鳥), and crane, among others. It is notable that most depictions of *seosu* are concentrated in celadons of the twelfth century although dragons, *bonghwang*, and cranes continued to appear in subsequent periods. As previous studies discussed each of these auspicious animals individually rather than examining them as a group, the significance of *seosu* in the twelfth-century celadons has not been considered in research thus far. For instance, researchers have addressed the Buddhist or Daoist connotations of the lion, *girin*, and *eoryong*, and there have been studies of the formal similarities between the Ru ware of the Song Dynasty and the *sancai* (tri-color) pottery of the Liao Dynasty (Baek 2004, 16-27; Lee 2011, 26-31). A recent study on *iryong* focuses on its iconography and possible use in royal ritual vessels (Kim 2018, 7-35). In such a way, research on the subject of *seosu* has continually focused on distinct examples and been neglected to take into account a more holistic perspective.

This paper examines the circumstances leading to the emergence of *seosu* as a formal element in the supreme-quality twelfth-century Goryeo celadons and the significance of such a development by focusing on the following three

aspects. First, the paper the perception and symbolic significance of auspicious beasts in the royal court and among the scholar-officials of the Goryeo Dynasty. Second, as *seosu* typically appear on incense burners, large bowls or basins, and *maebyeong* (prunus vases), this paper seeks to identify the correlation between vessel form and motif with particular respect to examples of *seosu* used in royal banquets or rituals. Third, this study determines the origin of *seosu* in Goryeo celadon by comparing relevant examples to metalware and discusses the iconography of *seosu* through an examination of Song Dynasty paintings and literature.

The Perception of *Seosu* at the Goryeo Royal Court and Its Political Connotations in the Twelfth Century

By the twelfth century, the formal aspects of Goryeo celadon were under the influence of various scriptures, literary works, *yeseo* (texts on etiquette), books on epigraphy, and paintings (Lee 2006, 159-61; Y. Kim 2014, 352-54). This phenomenon corresponded to the heightened understanding of Confucian or Daoist scriptures and the development of literary genres such as poetry and song lyrics during the reigns of King Yejong (r. 1105-1122) and King Injong (1123-1146). At this time, celadon reflected tastes and thoughts of the social elite who enjoyed high culture, naturally conferring prestige upon the ware. Thus, it is essential to discuss *seosu* and its perception within the context of the monopoly of Goryeo celadon by the royal court and nobility.

From the reign of King Yejong in the twelfth century, Confucian Classics, including *Shangshu* (*Ancient Document* 尚書), *Liji* (*The Book of Rites* 禮記), and *Shijing* (*Classic of Odes* 詩經), which praised the king's achievements and lauded the era of prosperity and peace, began to serve as topics for discussion during the king's royal lectures (*gyeongyeon*) for the king (J. Kim 2003, 225-34; Choi 2001, 120-27). In these Confucian texts, *seosu* are described as good omens for a dynasty's reign of peace and prosperity. In *Liji*, the chapter titled "Liyun" (The Conveyance of Rites) contains references to *seosu* as figures indicative of peaceful era: "Dragon-horses emerge from the Yellow River while both *bonghwang* and *girin* wander the suburban forest, and turtles and dragons live in the pond

of a royal palace.”¹ In a similar vein, *Shijing* mentions *girin* as a byword for benevolent animal and as a symbol of Confucius, the founder of Confucianism (Lee 2002, 429). Goryeo kings who reigned the country during the twelfth century developed a great interest in Confucian Classics like *Liji* and *Shijing* and commissioned numerous lectures and reading sessions to actively study these texts, thus leading to the understanding of *seosu* as an emblem of a peaceful era.

Seosu were also used in the literary works of scholar-officials to eulogize the benevolence of a king who induced an era of peace. During the reign of King Uijong (r. 1146-1170), Yi Gong-seung (1099-1183) offered the king a commemorative text to congratulate him on the appearance of a four-horned sheep he identified as *seosu*.² In 1170, several officials brought notable objects to the king and composed a poem of praise in which mugwort was referred to as auspicious grass and a waterfowl as *hyeonhak* (black crane 玄鶴).³ According to *Gujinzhu* (*Explanations of [Terminology of] Ancient and Present Times* 古今注) written by Cui Bao during the Jin Dynasty, *hyeonhak* is an imaginary black creature into which a crane transforms after two thousand years.⁴ The title of the poem cited on the state examination of 958 (the ninth year of the reign of King Gwangjong) is “*hyeonhak jeongsang*” (black crane as a propitious omen 玄鶴呈祥), an apt illustration of the wide understanding that a black crane was considered a sign of good omens bestowed by heaven (Y. Kim 2014, 359).⁵

Despite being mythical animals, the actual appearance of an entity identified as *seosu* was recognized as a propitious omen from heaven. *Seosu* were harbingers of political stability or a reign of prosperity and peace prescribed to the rule of a benevolent king. Both Yi Gong-seung, who cited the four-horned sheep as literary tribute to the king, and Hwang Mun-jang, who likened a

waterfowl to the black crane, were favorites of King Uijong. Examples of *seosu* manifested as propitious omens lauding the merits of a king are also found in *Jewang ungi* (*Songs of Emperors and Kings* 帝王韻紀) that recorded the history of China's dynasties in rhythmized poems.⁶ The particular poem from *Jewang ungi* expressed the political achievements of the Han Dynasty emperors using the phrase that “dragons, *girin*, and *bonghwang* came and brought auspicious omens.”⁷ In this way, the existence of *seosu* itself served as a political means to represent the king's benevolent rule and dignity.

Seosu were not only metaphors for beneficent kings but also tropes for high-ranking officials. In the late twelfth century, Im Chun (?-?) compared Yi Ji-myeong (1127-1191), who held the post of senior second rank Policy Adviser (*sangsi* 常侍), to an auspicious one-horned *girin* or *bonghwang* with *gupo* 九苞.⁸ Here, *gupo* signifies the nine feather colors or nine characteristics of the *bonghwang*, first conceptualized in the Daoist scripture *Shanhaijing* (*Classic of Mountains and Seas* 山海經).⁹ Such connections to *seosu* were undoubtedly influenced by the Daoist ethos prevalent among royal families and scholar-officials in the mid-Goryeo period. In his poem “Feng” (male of *bonghwang* mythical birds), the Tang poet Li Jiao writes, “the birds living in Danxue Mountain are *bonghwang* with nine features, a divine and favorable augury of brilliant color.”¹⁰ Moreover, *sogak* (vernacular music) passed down from the Three Kingdoms Period likened *bonghwang* to divine, auspicious omens symbolizing times of peace and benevolent rule.¹¹ In fact., there are several

1. The original text is as follows: “河出馬圖 鳳凰麒麟 皆在郊輒 龜龍在宮沼。”

2. See the entry for the seventh month in the twenty-third year of the reign of King Uijong in the “Great King Uijong Janghyo” vol. 11 of *Goryeosa jeoryo* (*Abridged History of the Goryeo Dynasty* 高麗史節要). The original text is as follows: “金遣橫賜使符寶郎徒單懷貞來，賜羊二千，有一羊四角，樞密使李公升以爲瑞獸表賀...”

3. The entry for the twenty-fourth year of the reign of King Uijong in the “Sega” vol. 19 of *Goryeosa* (*History of the Goryeo Dynasty* 高麗史) records as follows: “群臣皆占所見之物，爲嘉瑞。蓬艾三莖，生於亭，以爲瑞草，內侍黃文莊，見水鳥，指爲玄鶴，作詩讚之。王稱嘆良久，乃自製詩以和之。”

4. Cui Bao describes *hyeonhak* in Chapter “Birds and Beasts” of *Gujinzhu*, vol. 2 as follows: “鶴千歲則變蒼，又二千歲變黑，所謂玄鶴也。”

5. See the following entry in Choi Ja's *Bohanjip* (*Collection to Relieve Idleness* 補閑集): “學士雙冀典試春闈，亦以玄鶴呈祥爲詩題。”

6. Yi Seung-hyu wrote *Jewang ungi* consisting of two volumes in 1280 and offered it to King Chungnyeol in 1287. The first volume chronicled Chinese history from the era of Pangu through the Jin Dynasty using heptasyllabic verses, while the second volume documented Korean history from the era of Dangun till the reign of King Chungnyeol of Goryeo Dynasty.

7. The section on Emperor Gaozu of Han with a large figure and the imperial countenance in Yi Seung-hyu's *Jewang ungi*, vol. 1 records as follows: “龍與麟·鳳來呈瑞。”

8. The *gye* document written by Im Chun on Policy Adviser Yi Ji-myeong in the “Gye” vol. 15 of *Dongjin ji mun sayuk* (*Four-six Proses from Korean Literary Works* 東人之文四六) records as follows: “恭惟，閣下一角祥麟，九苞威鳳。”

9. *Gupo* is explained in Guo Pu's *Shanhaijing*, vol. 1 (*Qinding Siku quanshu* edition) as follows: “又東五百里曰丹穴之山，其上多金玉丹水出焉，而南流注于渤海，有鳥焉其狀如雞五采而文，名曰鳳凰。”

10. The original text of Li Jiao's poem on “feng” in *Quan Tangshi* (*Complete Tang Poetry* 全唐詩), vol. 60 is as follows: “有鳥居丹穴，其名曰鳳皇，九苞應靈瑞，五色成文章。”

11. The lyrics of vernacular music in Donggyeong (Gyerimbu; present-day Gyeongju) of Silla Kingdom make such comparison as recorded in the Samguk sogak section of ‘Ak II’ no. 25 of ‘Ji’ vol. 71 of *Goryeosa*. The original text is as follows: “新羅，昇平日久，政化醇美，靈瑞屢見，鳳鳥來鳴，國人作此歌以美之。”

literary works on Daoist immortals that portray *seosu* as divine entities serving as vehicles for Daoist immortals as will be further discussed in Chapter III of this paper.

Owing to the Daoist inclinations of Goryeo kings in the twelfth century, there was an increase in the number of Daoist rituals. Books and policies related to Daoism also exerted considerable impact on the whole of Goryeo royal culture. It is noteworthy that King Yejong attempted to replace Buddhism with Daoism through the transmission of scared Daoist diagrams known as *tulu* (chart-registers 圖籙).¹² King Yejong strove to promote Daoism by establishing Bokwongung, the first Daoist temple of the Goryeo royal court, requesting the dispatch of the Daoist masters from the Song imperial court, and facilitating discourse on Laozi's *Daodejing* (*The Book of Dao and Its Virtue* 道德經) during royal lectures (B. Kim 2003, 1-20).

During the reign of King Yejong, there was a sudden upsurge of Daoist rituals, which continued to take place throughout the reign of King Uijong (Table 1). At the time, it was common for the king to partake in the rituals as presider. Royal participation was essentially a demonstration of the king's authority as the official representative of heaven. As the Goryeo royal court began to officiate an increasing number of Daoist rituals in the twelfth century, there was a rise in the production of celadons in the shape of Daoist emblems like the *nansae* and *girin*. From the reign of King Gojong (r. 1213-1259) until the reign of King Chungnyeol (r. 1274-1308), Daoist rituals were again widely performed and celadons with inscriptions were produced for use during the rituals (Kim 2012, 54-71). These instances confirm that the Daoist tendencies and policies of the Goryeo royal court were indeed influences on the form and production of celadons.

The perception of *seosu* can also be examined in texts by Daoist aides to Goryeo kings. Kim Wi-je during the reign of King Sukjong (r. 1096-1105) and Eun Won-chung during the reign of King Yejong were both advocates of Daoism and supported the relocation of the capital to Namgyeong (present-day Seoul). Interestingly, *seosu* was one of the factors in the decision for the capital's

transfer. According to *Goryeosa* (*History of the Goryeo Dynasty* 高麗史), an era of peace and prosperity begins when the fish-dragon in Hangang River crosses the Four Seas and sacred fish in the Four Seas gather at Hangang River.¹³ At the time, the fish-dragon was perceived as a sacred fish symbolizing the reign of peace and prosperity within the Daoist worldview. Naturally, the fish-dragon became a formal aspect of the large basins, ewers, and incense burners produced in the twelfth century as celadons for use by the royal court during banquets or rituals. Thus, the Daoist inclination of the royal courts was an important catalyst for the portrayal of the fish-dragon and other *seosu* in Goryeo celadon.

Table 1. Number of Times of King's Participation in Royal *Choje* Daoist Ritual as an Officiator and Royal *Choje* Daoist Ritual Held during the Goryeo Dynasty (king's participation/*choje* ritual)

*King's name (accession year–abdication year)

King Deokjong 德宗 (1031–1034)	King Jeongjong 靖宗 (1034–1046)	King Munjong 文宗 (1046–1083)	King Seonjong 宣宗 (1083–1094)	King Sukjong 肅宗 (1095–1105)	King Yejong 睿宗 (1105–1122)	King Injong 仁宗 (1122–1146)	King Uijong 毅宗 (1146–1170)
1/1	1/3	6/13	7/10	2/14	18/29	7/14	10/29
King Myeongjong 明宗 (1170–1197)	King Sinjong 神宗 (1197–1204)	King Huijong 熙宗 (1204–1211)	King Gangjong 康宗 (1212–1213)	King Gojong 高宗 (1213–1259)	King Wonjong 元宗 (1259–1274)	King Chungnyeol 忠烈王 (1274–1308)	King Chungseon 忠宣王 (1298)
3/10	0	0	1/1	11/12	8/14	16/19	1/1
King Chungseon 忠宣王 (1308–1313)	King Chungsuk 忠肅王 (1313–1339)	King Chunghye 忠惠王 (1340–1344)	King Chungmok 忠穆王 (1344–1348)	King Chungjeong 忠定王 (1349–1351)	King Gongmin 恭愍王 (1351–1374)	King U 禑王 (1374–1388)	King Gongyang 恭讓王 (1389–1392)
0	5/6	0	3/4	0/1	0	0/8	1/1

12. In Chapter “Daoism” of his *Xuanbe fengshi Gaoli tujing* (*Illustrated Record of the Chinese Envoy to the Goryeo Court in the Xuanbe Era* 宣和奉使高麗圖經), vol. 18, Xu Jing addressed Goryeo Dynasty's Daoism as recorded in the following text: “或聞侯享國，日常有意授道家之籙，期以易胡教，其志未遂，若有所待然。”

13. This description can be found in Kim Wi-je section of “Banggi” no. 35 of “Yeoljeon” vol. 122 of *Goryeosa*. The original text is as follows: “臣又竊觀道誦踏山歌曰，松城落後向何處，三冬日出有平壤。後代賢士開大井，漢江魚龍四海通...四海神魚朝漢江，國秦人安致大平...睿宗時，殷元中亦以道誦說，上書言之。”

Daoist inclinations and policies of the royal court in the twelfth century also impacted banquet culture. *Dangak* (Chinese tunes 唐樂) included in the “Akji” (Monograph on Music) section of *Goryeosa* refers to court music that incorporates a literary genre of the Song Dynasty known as *ci* (song lyrics 詞). Although *Dangak* addresses a wide range of topics, a majority of the subject matter relates to Daoism. Since *Dangak jeongjae*, Chinese court banquet dance, was performed at royal banquets attended by the king, it served as a means to ensure the dynasty’s perpetuity and simultaneously show royal authority. The Daoist elements of *seosu*, immortals, elixirs, and the sacred Penglai Mountain in *Dangak* were expressions of a eulogy to the king, the king’s eternal youth, longevity, and reign of peace and prosperity. Goryeo’s *ci* literature and *Dangak jeongjae* rapidly developed during the reign of King Yejong, who used Daoism to strengthen his royal authority and was known to hold great appreciation for works of *ci* (Lee 2020, 287-96). Moreover, *Dangak* regarding auspicious beasts and Daoist immortals was played at the royal ceremonial processions formed during the reign of King Uijong.¹⁴ The royal ceremonial processions enacted during the rites of the Wongu Round Altar and Taemyo Imperial Ancestral Shrine were the most majestic and highly reputed. In these processions, various flags with images of many different auspicious beasts and Daoist deities were placed either at the center or on both sides of the king’s retinue. Auspicious animals signified the era of peace and prosperity through the king’s benevolent rule, while Daoist immortals including Xiwangmu (Queen Mother of the West) symbolized the ideal Daoist world where the king’s longevity and dynastic prosperity were achieved (Yi 2017, 175).

Particularly during the reign of King Yejong, the royal court made particularly strong efforts to promote Daoism, commission more royal lectures, and facilitate gatherings for poetry and song lyrics. Emperor Huizong (r. 1100-1125) of the Northern Song Dynasty had similar protocols. In actuality, King Yejong strove to emulate Emperor Huizong by embracing the culture and rituals of the Song Dynasty and establishing systems and policies based on those implemented during the reign of Huizong (Lee 2015, 221-29). Emperor Huizong was famed for his literary and artistic talent in poetry, song lyric, and painting. His interest in art and literature was not merely a hobby but a means

to demonstrate his political capability. Huizong produced numerous paintings called *seojungdo* (auspicious omens, Ch. *ruiyingtu* 瑞應圖) as an accompaniment for poems and song lyrics as a way to display his virtue and dignity while simultaneously solidifying his sovereignty (Bickford 2002/2003, 71-104; Sturman 1990, 38). *Seoeung* 瑞應 refers to several phenomena occurring in response to auspicious omens from heaven. In this sense, the eccentric bird-and-flower paintings and depictions of mythical birds and auspicious beasts are *seojungdo* produced during the reign of Emperor Huizong for the purposes of praising the sovereign’s benevolent rule and his era of peace and prosperity (Park 008, 66-67). King Yejong composed poetry and song in collaboration with Kwak Yeo (1058-1130), an excellent composer of *ci* songs inclined to Daoism. Literati scholar Yi Gyu-bo (1168-1241) later assessed their labors as markers of peace and prosperity.¹⁵ In the same manner, the concept of “*seoeung*” is realized in a eulogy to King Uijong likening grass and waterfowl to auspicious grass and the black crane.

Seosu or auspicious beasts symbolized the ideal world within the doctrines of Confucianism or Daoism. The imperial court of the Song Dynasty employed various symbols of good omens as subject matters in literature and paintings and as a means to propagate the emperor’s political accomplishments. Similarly, the Goryeo royal court incorporated *seosu* in celadons of the twelfth century as the visual representation of good omens. Thus, as the royal court of twelfth-century Goryeo acquired a deeper understanding of Confucianism and Daoism, celadon and *seosu* iconography increasingly reflected the court’s agenda of demonstrating the king’s political ideals, achievements, and authority.

14. See the section on royal procession and royal ceremonial procession in the “Yeobok” no. 26 of “Ji” vol. 72 of *Goryeosa*.

15. In the postscript to Song and Response Collection of King Yejong in “Bal” vol. 21 of *Dongguk Yi Sangguk jip* (Collected Works of Minister Yi of Korea 東國李相國後集), Yi Kyu-bo records as follows: “睿廟聰明天縱，制作如神，席太平之慶，乘化日之長，常與詞人逸士若郭瓌等賦詩著詠，縱金振玉，動中韶鈞，流播於人間，多為萬口頌頌，實太平盛事也。”

Goryeo Celadon with *Seosu* Iconography and Royal Court Rituals

Seosu-shaped Celadon Incense Burners and Royal Banquets

Celadon incense burners incorporating *seosu* forms feature lids topped with the sculptural shapes of lions, *girin*, dragons, turtle-dragons, fish-dragons, and other auspicious animals. These celadon *seosu* are hollow so that the smoke from burned incense passes through the body and exits the mouth. There are *seosu*-shaped celadon incense burners in museum collections in addition to other examples excavated from kiln sites and underwater ruins. Fragments of such celadon incense burners are typically unearthed at the Sadang-ri kiln site or Yongun-ri kiln site No. 10 in Gangjin. Underwater discoveries include two lion-shaped incense burners found in the waters of Daeseom Island on the west coast of the Korean Peninsula, shards of dragon and lion-shaped incense burners from the waters of Wonsando Island, and *girin*-shaped lids for incense burners in the waters of Jindo Island.

The overall form of *seosu* decorating an incense burner was created using a mold, but intricate features like the face, feathers, or mane were all sculpted by hand. Although the production of such detailed *seosu* decoration was a difficult and time-consuming process, it resulted in a high level of workmanship and quality. Therefore, unlike examples of a more common form, celadon incense burners incorporating *seosu* forms were most likely used exclusively by aristocrats and royal family members.

In *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* (*Illustrated Record of the Chinese Embassy to the Goryeo Court in the Xuanhe Era*), known in Korean as *Goryeo dogyeong* 宣和奉使高麗圖經), a Song Dynasty envoy Xu Jing (1091-1153) recorded the locations where different types of incense burners were used and explained their functions based on personal observations made during his visit to Goryeo in 1123. According to Xu Jing, *suro* 獸爐 referred to an incense burner in the shape of a mother animal and her young used solely in official events held at Hoegyongjeon Hall and Geondeokjeon Hall.¹⁶ Other records in *Xuanhe fengshi*

Gaoli tujing describe *baksanro* 博山爐, an incense burner replicating the form of Baksan Mountain used to permeate clothes with different scents,¹⁷ and *jeongro* (tripod incense burner 鼎爐) which was placed only in Daoist temples, Buddhist monasteries, or shrines for mountain gods.¹⁸ *Hyangnyeom* (incense case 香奩) was an incense burner meant for daily use at accommodations provided to Song Dynasty officials.¹⁹ These entries in Xu Jing's *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* indicate that incense burners were in use at royal events, Daoist or Buddhist temples, shrines for mountain gods, and in everyday life during the twelfth century.

Xu Jing, however, does not include any details to contextualize the use and function of the *sanyechulhyang* (lion-shaped incense burner 狻猊出香). There is one relevant entry that states, “among a wealth of celadon wares, the *sanyechulhyang* is [produced] with utmost precision, and the rest resemble Yuezhou wares or Ru wares.”²⁰ This observation suggests that Xu Jing had the opportunity to see a *sanyechulhyang* along with various other celadon vessels at a royal banquet held for Northern Song envoys dispatched to Goryeo. As illustrated by the Chinese painting *Palace Banquet* from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the lion-shaped incense burner was present at royal banquets of the Five Dynasties or Northern Song Dynasty (Hearn and Fong 1999, 62, 2e).

The banquet mainly takes place on the second-story terrace of a structure in the lower section of the painting. On the terrace are two black-lacquered tables and a rectangular table covered with a blue cloth. Various metal tableware, including dishes, ewers, cups and saucers, and a large bowl occupy the surfaces of the black-lacquered tables, and the table to the right has a lotus-shaped incense burner flanked by a cylindrical incense containers (Fig. 1). Inside the pavilion on the right side of the terrace are lion-shaped incense burners

17. Xu Jing describes *baksanro* in the “Vessels I” vol. 30 of *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* as follows: “博山爐本漢器也。海中有山，名博山，形如蓮花，故香爐取象。下有一盆，作山海波濤魚龍出沒之狀，以備貯湯薰衣之用。”

18. *Jeongro* is recorded in the “Vessels II” vol. 31 of Xu Jing's *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* as follows: “鼎爐之制，略如博山，上無花，下有三足。惟觀寺神祠用之。高一尺，頂闊六寸，下盤闊八寸。”

19. See the following entry for Dohal and Jehal ranks in the “Lodging Houses” vol. 27 of Xu Jing's *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing*: “室中器皿如香奩·酒榼·唾盂·食匱，悉以白金，貯水之具，皆用銅，物物悉備。”

20. The original text from the entry for celadon incense burner in the “Vessels III” vol. 32 of Xu Jing's *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* as follows: “狻猊出香，亦翳色也。上為蹲獸，下有仰蓮以承之，諸器，惟此物最精絕。其餘，則越州古秘色，汝州新窯器，大槩相類。”

16. *Suro* is recorded in the “Vessels I” vol. 30 of Xu Jing's *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* as follows: “子母獸爐，以銀為之，刻鏤制度精巧。大獸蹲踞，小獸作搏攫之形，返視張口，用以出香。惟會慶乾德公會，則置于兩楹之間。”

resembling *sanyechulhyang*. Here, one large, and three small lion-shaped incense burners are on top of the rectangular carpet (Fig. 1-1). Xu Jing would have seen such *sanyechulhyang* in use at the banquet held at the Goryeo royal court (Fig. 2). Taking into account the presence of a large drum behind the lion-shaped incense burners and the various musical instruments covered in cloths on the tables, these incense burners and musical instruments are presumed to have been used during performances of music, song, and dance during the banquet.

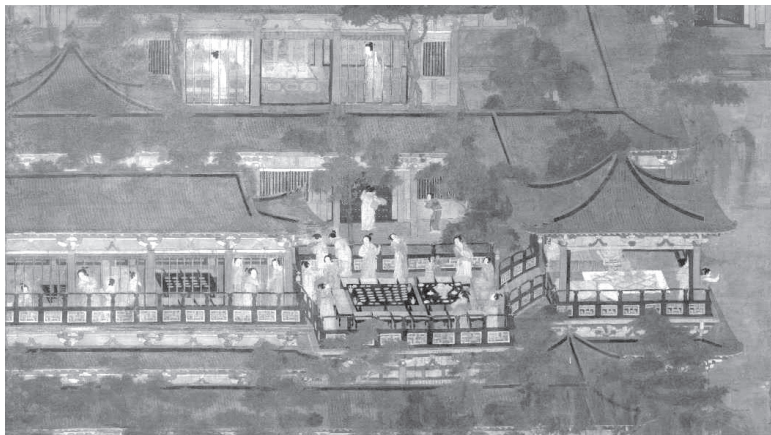


Figure 1. Detail of *Palace Banquet*, *Five Dynasties* (907–960)–Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127), China. Ink and color on silk, H. 161.6 × W. 110.8 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, U.S.A.



Figure 1-1. Lion-shaped Incense Burners in *Palace Banquet*



Figure 2. Celadon Incense Burner with Lid in the Shape of a Lion, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. 21.2 cm. National Museum of Korea, Seoul (gae 1)

There are specific instances of incorporating *seosu*-shaped celadon incense burners in musical performances at the Goryeo royal banquets. As the *Dangak* employed in the musical performances of the royal banquets was imported from the Song Dynasty, its lyrical contents consisted of *ci* popular in China at the time. As previously discussed, both Emperor Huizong of Northern Song and King Yejong of Goryeo liked *ci* song lyrics and were proficient at composing them. “Mannyeonhwan” (Eternal Joy 萬年歡) and “Manjohwan” (Joyful Court 滿朝歡) in the *Dangak* section of “Akji” in *Goryeosa* reveal some aspects of royal banquets held in the twelfth century. “Mannyeonhwan” describes a banquet where the king and officials drink, sing, and enjoy music at Samcheongjeon Hall in the Daoist temple Bokwongung. The scene is essentially a congratulatory acknowledgement of the peaceful era made possible through the king’s benevolent rule and concurrently embodies wishes for the king to experience longevity comparable to that of a Daoist immortal. Considering that King Yejong, who stressed the importance of Daoist principles, composed a *ci* song lyric entitled “Mannyeonsa” 萬年詞 in 1115 at a banquet attended by his subjects,²¹ “Mannyeonhwan” included in “Akji” was a *ci* song lyric composed by King Yejong (Lee 2020, 292). The strong Daoist inclinations of the author are evident in “Mannyeonhwan,” which makes reference to a *seosu*-shaped incense burner in the following verse:

As a pair of *nansae* [mythical birds] soar in dance
The scent of *hyangsu* [animal-shaped incense burner] disperses low
And the smoke of auspicious scene is a haze²²

Here, an auspicious scene is represented by *nansae* flying as if in dance and *hyangsu* 香獸 smoke dispersed low in haze. The two Northern Song books entitled *Xiangpu* (*Treatise on Aromatic Substances* 香譜), one written by Hong Chu and the other by Chen Jing, specifies in detail forms and functions of *hyangsu*. Both authors recount, “*hyangsu* takes the form of a gilt lion, *girin*, and duck with the scent of incense coming out of the mouth to linger in the air,

21. The original text of this entry for the third lunar month of the tenth year of the reign of King Yejong in the “Sega” vol. 14 of *Goryeosa* is as follows: “壬午 宴群臣于乾德殿，賦萬年詞，宣示左右。”

22. The full text of “Mannyeonhwan” can be found in the *Dangak* section of “Ak II” no. 25 of “Ji” vol. 71 of *Goryeosa*.

placed near to be enjoyed and appreciated.”²³ This description of *hyangsu* makes evident that incense burners produced in the shape of lions, *girin*, and ducks were used during royal banquets in twelfth century Goryeo. Examples of celadon *girin*-shaped incense burners in particular are in the collections of institutions such as the National Museum of Korea, Kansong Art Museum, and the Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka, and an incense burner lid shaped like a *girin* has been recently excavated from the waters near Jindo Island (Fig. 3) (National Research Institute of Maritime Cultural Heritage 2015, 310-11).



Figure 3. Celadon Incense Burner with Lid in the Shape of a *Girin*, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. 17.6 cm. National Museum of Korea, Seoul (duk 3063)

The *ci* song lyric “Manjohwan,” which wishes the king a long life, contains the following verse: “more dragon incense powders for the making of smoke are added to *seosu*.”²⁴ Here, the term *seosu* refers to a *seosu*-shaped incense burner used at banquets. A Song Dynasty *ci* song lyric composed by Ge Shengzhong (1072-1144) also treats *seosu* as a metonym for a *seosu*-shaped incense burner.²⁵ These literary excerpts confirm that incense burners featuring *seosu* forms were new vessels introduced to the banquet culture of a royal court recently transformed by the Daoist inclinations of King Yejong.

Yet another example is the correlation between the lyrics of

“Hwanggungak” in “Akji” of *Goryeosa* and the sculptural form of the Celadon Bird-shaped Ewer with Crowned Rider Holding a Bowl at the Art Institute of Chicago in the U.S. (Fig. 4).

How joyful!

Our king has impressed [the Daoist immortals living on] Penglaishan Mountain
Causing their descent from the mountain.

They come down riding *nansae* and cranes to a pavilion occupied by the king
To offer him an elixir of immortality²⁶

These verses from “Hwanggungak” describe Daoist immortals descending Penglaishan Mountain while riding *nansae* and cranes to offer the king an elixir of immortality. The celadon ewer at the Art Institute of Chicago is sculpted in the shape of a bird on which rides a human figure wearing the robe of a Daoist immortal while holding a large bowl with an elixir of immortality as a gift to the king. The bird portrayed with a head crest, voluptuous body, and beautiful tail is the mythical bird *nansae* used as a means of transportation by Daoist immortals (Kim 2012, 58-60). It is intriguing to note the parallels between *seosu*-shaped celadon incense burners or ewers and *ci* song lyrics that portray dynastic prosperity and the king’s longevity through allusions to Daoist utopia. Ultimately, King Yejong’s fascination with Daoism and the popularization of *ci* literature and *Dangak* were crucial catalysts to the production of *seosu*-shaped celadon in the early twelfth century.



Figure 4. Celadon Bird-shaped Ewer with Crowned Rider Holding a Bowl, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. 21.4 cm. Art Institute of Chicago, U.S.A.

23. The original text is recorded in Hong Chu’s *Xiangpu*, vol. 2 as follows: “香獸以塗金為狻猊·麒麟·鳧鴨之狀，空中以然香，使煙自口出，以為玩好。” See also Chen Jing’s *Chenshi xiangpu*, vol. 4.

24. The original text of this verse can be found in the *Dangak* section of “Ak II” no. 25 of “Ji” vol. 71 of *Goryeosa*.

25. This *ci* song lyric entitled “Moon over the West River (composed at uncle’s eightieth celebration banquet)” by Ge Shengzhong during the Song Dynasty includes the following verse: “The scent of *seosu* drifts like gently floating clouds, and embroidered curtains in Huatang Hall are hung low” 瑞獸香雲輕翳 華堂繡幕低垂. Here, *seosu* means a *seosu*-shaped incense burner.

26. The full text of “Hwanggungak” can be found in the *Dangak* section of “Ak II” no. 25 of “Ji” vol. 71 of *Goryeosa*.

Celadon with Designs of Marine Seosu and Royal Court Rituals

Besides sculptural celadons, the iconography of *seosu* or auspicious beasts are observed in the decorative motifs of celadons. Although the *seosu* decorating celadons are sometimes arranged among designs of flowers or clouds, the majority are auspicious beasts pictured among a background of waves known as the “marine *seosu*” type. This category of marine *seosu* design often decorates the surfaces of large bowls and basins, *maebyeong*, square trays, and incense burners. A few examples will be discussed here.

Designs of marine *seosu* were used to decorate special types of celadons, such as large bowls and basins with openings over thirty centimeters in diameter. The Large Celadon Bowl with Incised Wave, Ox, and Horse Design at the Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka has a height of 16.4 cm and a mouth diameter of 31.5 cm. It has a wide, gently flaring rim and gradually narrows from mouth to base. The bowl’s interior base features alternating designs of oxen and horses swimming among rolling waves (Figs. 5 and 5-1). This bowl is presumed to have been produced during the first half of the twelfth century, as it was fired using ivory supports of refractory clay attached to twelve places in the foot of the vessel. Shards of celadon with similar designs were discovered in



Figure 5. Large Celadon Bowl with Incised Wave, Ox, and Horse Design, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. 16.4 × Diam. of mouth 16.4 cm. Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka, Japan



Figure 5-1. Design Illustration of Large Celadon Bowl with Incised Wave, Ox, and Horse Design

the second layer of the Yongun-ri kiln site No. 10 in Gangjin.²⁷

Of note is that the oxen and horses on this large bowl bear resemblance to the rhinoceros and a sea horse in the “Tuyang” (pattern illustration) volume of the *Yingzao fashi* (*Building Standards* 營造法式).²⁸ The oxen in the large bowl and the rhinoceros in the *Yingzao fashi* manual share similarities in overall form, the presence of a horn on the forehead, the depiction of short lines in the body, and the feather-like tail (Fig. 6). As for the horse pictured on the bowl and the sea horse in *Yingzao fashi*, there are again identical aspects such as the mane and the representation of *seogi* (propitious energy) as oblong elements (Fig. 7). Such visual affinity proves that the oxen and horses decorating the large bowl are not common domestic animals but rather animals of auspicious nature like the rhinoceros and sea horses. Goryeo celadons that feature the iconography of rhinoceros and sea horses swimming among waves are extremely rare. Nevertheless, the large bowl is an important example that demonstrates the adaptation of iconography sourced from the Northern Song Dynasty building manual *Yingzao fashi* for the decoration of celadon. Since such iconography also appears in

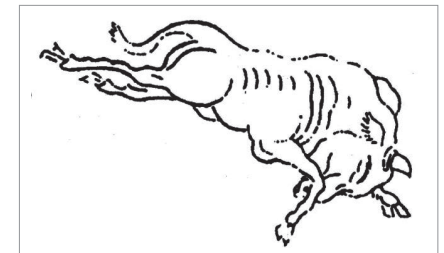


Figure 6. Pattern Illustration of “Rhinoceros” from the *Yingzao fashi* (*Building Standards* 營造法式) vo. 33. 1100, Northern Song Dynasty



Figure 7. Pattern Illustration of “Sea Horse” from the *Yingzao fashi* (*Building Standards* 營造法式) vo. 33. 1100, Northern Song Dynasty

27. These shards of celadon with wave, ox, and horse design excavated from the second layer of Yongun-ri kiln site No. 10 in Gangjin were fired with its unglazed foot placed over refractory-clay supports. See Chung and Koo 1996, 191, pl. 732.

28. *Yingzao fashi* written by Li Jie in 1100 during the Northern Song Dynasty explicated architectural designs and building constructions and was published in 1103. See the entry for “The third illustration: flying Daoist immortals, birds, beasts, and others” in the Illustrations I of Color Painting System, vol. 33 of the *Yingzao fashi* (*Qinding Siku quanshu* edition at Wenyuange Imperial Library of the Forbidden City) by Li Jie.

the illustrated version of the Daoist scripture *Shanhaijing*, it may be related to Daoist rituals held in increasing frequency at the Goryeo royal court during the twelfth century (Fig. 25).

The Large Celadon Basin with Incised and Raised Fish-dragon Design at Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art has a mouth 35.7 centimeters in diameter, an outward flared rim, and a body that is round, wide, and flat. The inner bottom of the basin displays a fish-dragon and a wish-granting jewel against the backdrop of rolling waves. The overall outlines of the fish-dragon and jewel are distinctively and deeply incised, while their details are delineated with fine lines. The fish-dragon



Figure 8. Large Celadon Basin with Incised and Raised Fish-dragon Design (Line Drawing of Design by the Author), 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. Diam. of mouth 35.7 cm. Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul

is a creature with a dragon's head and the body of a fish with large wings (Fig. 8). During the firing process, the unglazed flat foot of this basin was placed over sixteen white supports composed of refractory-clay (Hyun 1999, 165). A fragment of a similar large celadon basin excavated from the Sadang-ri kiln site in Gangjin has traces of the use of quartz supports during firing (Kang and Jang 2015, 504, pl. 119). The fish-dragon designs on these two celadon vessels share many similarities as if they are based on the same model, but they used different supports during firing; the Leeum basin employed supports made of refractory clay but the Sadang-ri example used quartz supports. This indicates that refractory-clay and quartz supports were simultaneously employed in the production of celadons for use at the royal court in the early twelfth century. Like the large celadon bowls discussed previously, large celadon basins were presumably created in the early twelfth century, thereby attesting to the use of diverse auspicious animals to decorate celadons during this period.

The form of the large celadon basin originated from metalware, as demonstrated by the Large Bronze Basin excavated in Seomun-dong, Huicheon-si, Jagang-do Province, which is now part of North Korea. This

large bronze basin bears an inscription that includes the term “sara” 斲羅 (Kim 2009, 11-13).²⁹ *Sara* refers to a large basin used for washing hands during rituals (Lu 2001, 391). In China, since the Zhou Dynasty, the action of cleaning one's hands was an important procedure in ancestral rites (Ma 2019, 169-70). The same was true in Goryeo where cleansing the hands was an essential part of various ceremonies that the king participated in such as mid- to large-scale auspicious ceremonies, family rites, lantern ceremonies, and *palgwanhoe* (Assembly of the Eight Prohibitions).³⁰ Therefore, the Large Celadon Basin with Incised and Raised Fish-dragon Design at Leeum also might have been used as a vessel for washing hands during various rituals attended by the king.

Sara was also used as a ritual object and the diplomatic or royal gift in the royal courts of Goryeo and the Song and Jin Dynasties. An entry in *Goryeosa* documents that Emperor Shenzong of the Song Dynasty bestowed imperial gifts, including gold *sara*, on Goryeo in 1072.³¹ The act of offering *sara* as a sign of imperial favor shows that the Song imperial court regarded *sara* as a valuable object. A gold *sara* was among the gifts that Goryeo offered to Song in 1080,³² and the list of royal gifts bestowed by King Yejong in 1108 included a silver *sara*.³³ During the Jin Dynasty, the *sara* was a part of the attendant's mandatory preparations in reception of the emperor, and thus always made available in

29. The inscription on the Large Bronze Basin unearthed from Seomun-dong, Huicheon-si, Jagang-do Province, which is now part of North Korea reads that “the lodging house at Imban station in the north of Seonju made and offered a ritual *sara* weighing twelve *geum* and twelve *nyang* in the eighth lunar month of the Imja Year (1252)” 壬子八月日 造上宣州北林畔驛客舍 祖斲羅壹入重拾貳斤拾貳兩.

30. The procedure, place, and the official-in-charge of washing hands can be identified in various kinds of rites and ceremonies recorded in *Goryeosa*. These rites and ceremonies include large-scale auspicious ceremonies at Hwangu Round Altar, Taemyo Imperial Ancestral Shrine, and Byeolmyo Separate Shrine; mid-scale auspicious ceremonies at *jeokjeon* (royal house's private farmland), *seonjam* (sericulture rite) altar, and the Shrine for King Wenxuan; and other family rites.

31. Shenzong's bestowal of *sara* upon Goryeo Dynasty is recorded in the entry for the sixth lunar month of the twenty-sixth year of the reign of King Munjong in the “Sega” vol. 9 of *Goryeosa*. The original text is as follows: “甲戌, 金梯, 還自宋... 金腰帶一條, ... 金合二副, ... 金盤盞二副, ... 金注子一副, ... 金斲羅一隻, ...”

32. Goryeo's offering of *sara* to Song is documented in the entry for the seventh lunar month in autumn of the thirty-fourth year of the reign of King Munjong in the “Sega” vol. 9 of *Goryeosa*. The original text is as follows: “癸亥條 柳洪等, 還自宋, 帝附勅八道, ... 省所進謝恩, 御衣二領, 金腰帶二條, 金斲羅一面, 金花銀器二千兩...”

33. Yejong's bestowal of *sara* upon his officials is recorded in the entry for the third lunar month of the Muja year in Chapter “Great King Yejong Munhyo” I of *Goryeosa jeoryo*, vol. 7. The original text is as follows: “癸亥條 柳洪等, 還自宋, 帝附勅八道, ... 省所進謝恩, 御衣二領, 金腰帶二條, 金斲羅一面, 金花銀器二千兩...”

places occupied by the emperor or used for the purposes of rituals.³⁴

The origin of the fish-dragon can be traced to makara, an imaginary animal of ancient India. Once its image was disseminated to China, the makara was sinicized into a creature with a dragon's head and the body of a fish. At the present, the animal is known in China as *mojie* 摩竭 or 摩羯 (Chang 2019, 131-33). The makara of ancient India takes the combined form of a crocodile, elephant, and fish. It is described as a creature with a long nose curling up and outward, an open mouth with sharp teeth, and a fin-shaped tail. *Mojie* designs in the Liao, Song, and Jin Dynasties were characterized by the composite of a dragon head and fish body with large wings, which are reminiscent of the fish-dragon designs on twelfth-century Goryeo celadons.

The fish-dragon or *mojie* design was also used to decorate porcelains for imperial use during the Song and Jin Dynasties. As a case in point, two Ding porcelains adorned with the *mojie* design were excavated from the Northern Song Dynasty mausoleum of Empress Yuande of the Li clan (943-977). One of the porcelains was inscribed with the Chinese character for 官 (official) (Henansheng wenwu yanjiusuo 1988, 38, pls. 16-2 and 16-3).³⁵ Moreover, eighteen Ding porcelains with the *mojie* design and inscriptions of “Shangshiju” (Imperial Cuisine Department 尙食局) were unearthed at the site of a temporary imperial palace probably from the late Jin period (Huang Xin 2019, 44-45). Since the Goryeo royal court perceived the fish-dragon as a sacred fish, the fish-dragon design must have been applied to celadons produced for use at the royal court.

The composite design of wave and dragon can be observed in celadon wares of diverse forms, including *maebyeong*, square trays, incense burners, and pillows. Since the beginning of the Goryeo Dynasty, the dragon was considered a symbol of royal authority, and it was often used to decorate celadon in

and after the twelfth century (Lee 2009, 343-46). In 1025 and 1043, there were promulgations of ordinances prohibiting the depiction of dragons and *bonghwang* in the clothing and objects of commoners.³⁶ This ban imposed in the eleventh century is indicative of the popularity and frequent use of dragon and *bonghwang* designs by people outside of the royal court and of diverse social backgrounds. However, the eleventh-century celadons with dragon design have yet to be discovered.

Designs of waves and dragons among clouds frequently appear on the shoulder and lower portions of twelfth-century celadon *maebyeong*. Positioned between the clouds in the upper and lower sections of the vase, the dragons soar up into or descend from the sky against the waves. Examples of such celadon *maebyeong* include the Celadon Prunus Vase with Carved Dragon at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and several shards of celadon prunus vase with dragon design excavated from the Sadang-ri kiln site in Gangjin. The dragons in the former are soaring up into the sky, whereas the latter is decorated with a descending dragon (Figs. 9-10). The clouds carved on the upper and lower sections of these two vases are not schematized, swirling and drifting in space. An interesting point to note is that these clouds bear close resemblance to the pattern illustration of *haishiliuhua* (camellia) and cloud for roof support brackets in *Yingzao fashi* (Figs. 10-1 and 11).³⁷ Such similarities can be understood in the same context as the likeness between the design of oxen and horses on the large celadon bowl at the Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka and the illustration of the rhinoceros and sea horse in *Yingzao fashi*. Thus, the twelfth-century celadon *maebyeong* with wave and dragon design also demonstrate a correlation between Goryeo celadon designs and Northern Song paintings and pattern illustrations of the early twelfth century.

34. The imperial use of *sara* during the Jin Dynasty can be found in the following entries from the “Yiweishang” no. 22 of “Ji” vol. 41 of *Jinshi* (*History of the Jin Dynasty* 金史): “其常朝·御殿·郊廟·臨幸, 凡步輦出入則有近侍導從, 執金鍍銀骨朵者二人, 左右扇十人, 拂子四人, 盒二人, 香球二人, 節二人, 幢二人, 盃一人, 唾壺一人, 淨巾一人, 鏤羅一人, 水罐一人, 交椅一人, 斧一人, 皇帝出閣則分立開門之外, 導引至殿, 皇帝升座則降階以俟, 入閣然後放仗。”

35. Emperor Zhenzong of Song posthumously honored his mother as Empress Yuande of the Li clan, moved her tomb to Gong County in Henan Province, and newly constructed her mausoleum in 1000. Thirty-seven Ding porcelains have been excavated from the mausoleum of Empress Yuande of the Li clan. Two of them have *mojie* design. Although the excavation report mistakes *mojie* design for flying *feng* (male mythical bird) design, it is fish-dragon *mojie* design.

36. See the following entry for the ninth lunar month of the sixteenth year of the reign of King Hyeonjong in the “Great King Hyeonjong Wonmun” vol. 3 of *Goryeosa jeoryo*: “禁中外民庶衣服器物龍鳳紋樣。” See also the following entry for the prohibitions in the “Hyeongbeop II” no. 39 of “Ji” vol. 85 of *Goryeosa*: “靖宗九年四月, 禁中外男女錦繡·銷金·龍鳳紋·綾羅衣服。”

37. See the entry for “The fifth illustration: bracket sets and miscellaneous designs” in the Illustrations of Wood-Carving System, vol. 32 of the *Yingzao fashi* (*Qingding Siku quanshu* edition at Wenyuange Imperial Library of the Forbidden City) by Li Jie. *Yungong* 雲拱 refers to *dougong* (roof support brackets placed above posts 斗拱) carved with cloud design.



Figure 9. Celadon Prunus Vase with Carved Dragon, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. 35.5 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, U.S.A.



Figure 10. Fragments of Celadon Prunus Vase with Incised and Raised Wave and Dragon Design, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. (currently) 33.4 cm. Excavated from the kiln site in Sadang-ri, Gangjin. Gwangju National Museum, Gwangju



Figure 10-1. Cloud Design on the Shoulders of Celadon Prunus Vase

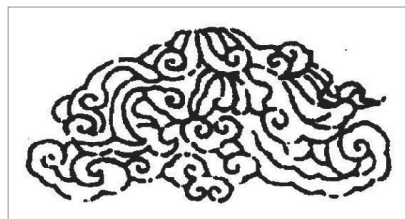


Figure 11. Pattern Illustration of "Camellia and Cloud for Roof Support Brackets" from the *Yingzao fashi* (*Building Standards* 營造法式) vo. 32. 1100, Northern Song Dynasty

During the Song Dynasty, images of *Dragon in Water* depicting dragons with waves were painted on folding screens placed behind the emperor's throne and inside of buildings where rituals were held. The use of such imagery suggests its status and role. In the Tianxi era (1017-1021) during the Song Dynasty, a water dragon was painted on the folding screen put behind the throne in

Huilingguan Shrine.³⁸ A golden dragon emerging from water appears on the folding screen located behind the throne in Shuixindian Hall by the Jinming Pond. Finally, a dragon in water also decorates the rear wall of Yuhuangdian Hall in Yijiaooyuan Cloister of Jianlongguan Temple.³⁹ Rituals for the Five Sacred Mountains were held at Huilingguan Shrine, and Jianlongguan was a Daoist temple.⁴⁰ Many entries in *Songshi* (History of the Song Dynasty 宋史) record that emperors prayed for rain or snow at Huilingguan Shrine and Jianlongguan Temple, indicating that imageries of Dragon in Water were painted in ritual spaces related to prayers for precipitation. Particular objects with the wave and dragon design such as *maebyeong*, incense burners, and square trays, decorated might have been used during royal rites for the entreaty of rain or snow.

The Sculptural Origin and Significance of Goryeo Celadon with *Seosu* Iconography

The Formal Elements of Metalware

Celadon with *seosu* (auspicious beast) iconography was a new form of celadon that emerged in the twelfth century. As Goryeo continued to participate in cultural exchange with the Liao, Song, and Jin dynasties, new formal elements were incorporated into the scheme of Goryeo celadon. A large number of studies have already investigated the formal similarities between Goryeo celadons and Liao, Song, and Jin ceramics from the twelfth century. Accordingly, this paper aims to focus on the formal elements of metalware seen in Goryeo celadon with *seosu* iconography.

38. See the following entry in *Tuhua jianwen zhi* (*Record of Experiences in Painting* 圖畫見聞志), vol. 4, in repr. *Sibu congkan xubian* (Sequel compilation of the *Sibu congkan* [Collection of books classified in the four categories]), vol. 322: "荀信, 江南人, 工畫龍水. 真宗朝為翰林待詔, 天禧中嘗被旨畫會靈觀御座屏展 看水龍妙絕, 一時後移入禁中."

39. See the following entry in *Tuhua jianwen zhi*, vol. 4: "任從一, 京師人, 仁宗朝為翰林待詔. 工畫龍水海魚為時推賞. 舊有金明池水 心殿御座屏展, 畫出水金龍, 勢力適怪. 今建隆觀翊教院殿後, 有所畫龍水二壁."

40. See the following entry in the "Tianshu fengsi" vol. 22 of *Songshi jishi benmo* (*Historical Events of the Song Period in Their Entirety* 宋史紀事本末): "大中祥符 五年八月, 作會靈觀, 奉祀五嶽." See also the following entry in the "Fangji II" of "Liezhuang" vol. 221 of *Songshi* (History of the Song Dynasty 宋史): "甄棲真...初訪道於牢山華蓋先生, 久之出游京師, 因入建隆觀為道士."

The Celadon Fish-Dragon Ewer of the Goryeo Dynasty and the Three-color Fish-Dragon Ewer of the Liao Dynasty share comparable iconography (Figs. 12-13) (Baek 2004, 57-58; Im 2005, 103-04; Lee 2009, 350-51). However, the quality and environments of production were far better for Goryeo celadons than Liao ceramics at the time, as evident by the drastic differences in overall form and detailed expression. Hence, the origin of the Goryeo celadon ewer is not the tri-color ewer of the Liao dynasty but rather its predecessor, possibly the metal ewer that it was modeled after. The dynamics of influence are demonstrated by the affinity seen between the Goryeo Celadon Turtle-dragon Ewer and the Liao Gilt-bronze Turtle-dragon Ewer (Chen 2006, 166-67) (Figs. 14-15). These two examples were built with different material but are almost identical in overall shape and detail. More specifically, the turtle-dragon of both ewers exhibit the same characteristics such as the placement above a lotus flower, a long upper snout, the shape of the horn, the expression of curling eyebrows using short diagonal lines, a leaf-shaped mane, and the form of the turtle. Given such formal similarities, there is a strong probability that the prototype of the celadon ewer with *seosu* iconography was a metal ewer rather than a tri-color ceramic ewer.



Figure 12. Celadon Ewer in the Shape of a Fish-dragon, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. 24.4 cm. National Museum of Korea, Seoul (gae 2)



Figure 13. Tri-color Ewer in the Shape of a Fish-dragon, 11th century, Liao Dynasty, China. H. 26.5 cm. Excavated from Ningcheng in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Liaozhongjing Museum of Ningcheng County, China



Figure 14. Celadon Ewer in the Shape of a Turtle-dragon, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. 17.3 cm. National Museum of Korea, Seoul (duk 5636)



Figure 15. Gilt-bronze Ewer in the Shape of a Turtle-dragon, Liao Dynasty (907-1125), China. H. 13.5 cm. Alan Chen's Fine Arts, Taipei, Taiwan

During the Northern Song Dynasty, both celadon and metal lion-shaped incense burners were produced. Celadon incense burners were made at the Ru and Yaozhou kilns. The Bronze Lion Incense Burner was excavated from the lower crypt of the Liaobin Pagoda in Shenyang, Liaoning Province, which was built between 1110 and 1114 during the Liao Dynasty (Shenyangsi wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 2006, 49) (Fig. 16). This bronze incense burner is a typical example of incense burners consisting of a lotus-shaped body and a lion-shaped lid. In the case of the Goryeo celadon *seosu*-shaped incense burner, however, its body has an everted rim and three legs. The inner edge of the rim is slightly raised to hold the lid in place (Fig. 2-1). Since a raised rim and three legs can also be observed in the metal incense burner from the Goryeo Dynasty, the celadon example was likely based on its metal counterpart (Fig. 17). Several historical records, including *Xiangpu*, describe *seosu*-shaped incense burners as gold or gilt incense burners. The *seosu*-shaped incense burners are also depicted as metalware in many paintings. Thus, the formal origin of *seosu*-shaped incense burner lies in metalware.



Figure 16. Bronze Incense Burner in the Shape of a Lion, 1110–1114, Liao Dynasty, China. H. 23 cm. Excavated from the crypt of the Liaobin Pagoda in Shenyang, Liaoning Province. Shenyangsi wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, “Shenyang Xinmin Liaobinta tagong qingli jianbao.” *Wenwu* 4 (2006): 50



Figure 2-1. Body of Celadon Incense Burner with Lid in the Shape of a Lion. H. of body. 8.1 × Diam. of body 16.3 cm



Figure 17. Silver-inlaid Incense Burner, Goryeo Dynasty (918–1392). H. 7.4 × Diam. 15.2 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, U.S.A.

The Large Celadon Basin with Incised and Raised Fish-dragon Design at Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art also bears a resemblance to gold or silver wares of the Liao Dynasty (Fig. 8). Although the Song Dynasty Yuezhou, Ding, and Yaozhou kilns in operation during the eleventh and twelfth centuries produced ceramics with the *mojie* (fish-dragon) design, it is yet to be confirmed if these kilns produced large basins. In



Figure 18. Silver-gilt Basin with *Mojie* Design, Liao Dynasty (907–1125), China. Excavated from the tomb in Tongliao in Inner Mongolia. H. 6.3 × Diam. of mouth. 37.3 cm

China, large basins were produced using metal and used for imperial rites from the Tang Dynasty throughout the Liao and Song Dynasties. Several large silver and gold basins from the Tang and Liao periods survive today. There is a high probability that large celadon basins of Goryeo were particularly influenced by the metal basins of Liao, a dynasty that maintained close ties with Goryeo. As a case in point, the Silver-gilt Basin with *Mojie* Design unearthed from the Liao Dynasty tomb in Tongliao of Inner Mongolia resembles the Large Celadon Basin at Leeum in overall shape and size (Kyushu kokuritsu hakubutsukan 2011, 76). In the center of the basin's inner base are two *mojie* with two wish-granting jewels in between them among incised waves (Fig. 18). Fish-dragons depicted in Goryeo celadon and Liao metalware both exhibit large wings, but have different facial characteristics. The fish-dragon in Goryeo celadon has a face typical of a horned dragon, whereas the fish-dragon in Liao metalware has a rolled upper snout consistent with the tradition Tang design of *mojie*.

A correlation between Goryeo celadon and Liao metalware can be found in the wave and dragon design applied to the twelfth-century celadon *maebyeong*. The shards of the celadon *maebyeong* with wave and dragon design excavated from the Sadang-ri kiln site in Gangjin show that the body of this vase was originally divided into eight equal parts. Each facet contains an ogival-shaped window enclosing a dragon. Unfortunately, the overall shape of the vase cannot be ascertained due to severe damages (Figs. 19 and 19-1). Nonetheless, the remaining fragments display a dragon soaring amidst layers of semicircular waves inside a long and narrow window (Fig. 19-2). The wave and dragon



Figure 19. Fragments of Celadon Prunus Vase with Wave and Dragon Design, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. (currently) 34.2 cm. Excavated from the kiln site in Sadang-ri, Gangjin. Gwangju National Museum, Gwangju

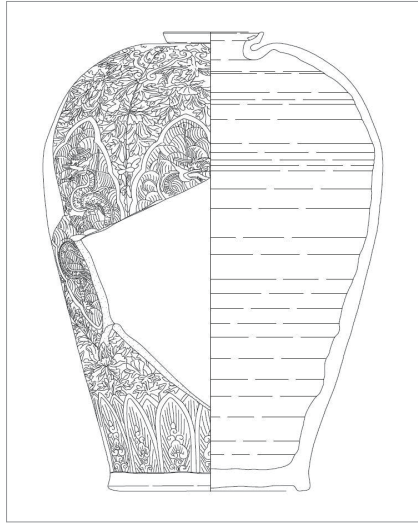


Figure 19-1. Illustration of Celadon Prunus Vase with Wave and Dragon Design



Figure 19-2. Detail of Dragon Design on Celadon Prunus Vase with Wave and Dragon Design



Figure 20. Panel of Gold Waist Belt, Liao Dynasty (907–1125), China. Excavated from the tomb of Princess of Chen (1001–1018)



Figure 9-1. Detail of Dragon Design on Celadon Prunus Vase Carved Dragon

design on this vase is reminiscent of the wave and dragon on a gold waist belt excavated from the tomb of Princess of Chen (1001-1018) from the Liao Dynasty. This belt consists of eight gold panels, each adorned with a dragon, to present a series of four soaring and four descending dragons (Neimenggu Zzizhiqu wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo and Zheli mumeng bowuguan 1993, 78-79). The wave and dragon designs on the *maebyeong* fragments and the gold waist belt both exhibit layered semicircle waves and the dragons are nearly identical with the same S-shaped bodies, two horns, front and hind legs, tail, and even posture (Fig. 20). A comparable dragon can be seen on the Celadon Prunus Vase with Carved Dragon at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Fig. 9-1).

Song Dynasty metalware feature similar designs as the Large Celadon Bowl with Incised Wave, Ox, and Horse Design at the Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka. For example, the middle section of the Silver Incense Burner Saucer, found in the storage pit for Southern Song Dynasty gold and silver objects in Pengzhou of Sichuan Province, is decorated with a design of animals like the fish, turtle, sheep, deer, and beasts swimming among waves (Chengdusi wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo and Pengzhoushi bowoguan 2003, 174-75) (Fig. 21).⁴¹ Similarly, the Silver Cup Saucer with Designs of Sea Animals from the Song Dynasty shows an elephant, rhinoceros, turtle, and other animals swimming in the waves (Takeda 1989. 103) (Fig. 22).

41. The inner bottom of this saucer bears an inscription “香壺壹座，厚德堂，重柒十兩。” Here, *hyangryeom* 香壺 means an incense burner.

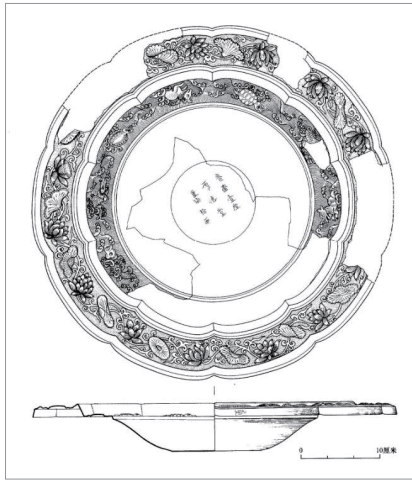


Figure 21. Silver Incense Burner Saucer, Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279), China. Excavated from the storage pit for gold and silver objects in Pengzhou, Sichuan Province. Pengzhou City Museum, China

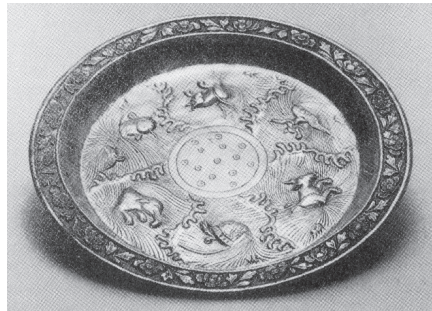


Figure 22. Silver Cup Saucer with Fantastic Sea Animal Design, Song Dynasty (960–1279), China. Private Collection

The Goryeo celadons of the twelfth century demonstrate that the ceramic industries of Korea received influence not only from ceramics of the Liao, Song, and Jin Dynasties, but also from metalware of the Liao and Song Dynasties. Close ties between Goryeo and Liao led to the expanding influence of Liao metalware, which affected both the metalware and celadon of Goryeo between the eleventh and the twelfth centuries (Kim 2007, 47-54).

Daoist Symbolism and the World of Daoist Immortals

Different types of *seosu* (auspicious beasts) depicted in celadons appear in literary works and paintings related to Daoism. An examination of *seosu* imagery and its iconographic significance and symbolism contextualizes the significance and meaning of *seosu* celadon wares used by the Goryeo royal court in the twelfth century.

In the *ci* literature popular in the twelfth century during the Goryeo Dynasty, the *seosu*-shaped incense burner emerged as an object of the mysterious and fantastic world of Daoist immortals. Descriptions of these incense burners are found in *Taiping guangji* (*Extensive Records Compiled in*

the Taiping Era 太平廣記), published in 978 during the early Northern Song Dynasty.⁴² According to *Taiping guangji*, when Cui Wei, who became a Daoist immortal in the Tang period, entered a cave inhabited by other Daoist immortals, “the cave was filled with the pleasant scent of incense smoke that came from the mouths of a serpent-like dragon, *nansae*, *bonghwang*, snake-entwined tortoise, and *nanjak* (Ch. *luanque*) bird decorating gold incense burners placed in front of the curtain.”⁴³

From the Six Dynasties and throughout the Tang and Song Dynasties, literary works and paintings established the *seosu*-shaped incense burner as the exclusive property of Daoist immortals. *Procession of Immortals Paying Homage to the Primordial* painted by Wu Zongyuan during the Northern Song Dynasty is a handscroll measuring about seven meters long. This work was a draft produced for the mural painting at the Daoist temple Yuqing zhaoying gong built in the Song period (Little and Eichman 2000, 240-41; He 2005, 52-60). The painting illustrates the procession of male and female Daoist immortals crossing a bridge over a pond. Here, the Jade Maiden of Great Elixir holds a round tray containing an incense burner with dragon decoration and a lotus stand. Another female Daoist immortal holds an incense burner topped with a sculptural *bonghwang* (Fig. 23). The Celadon Incense Burner with a Dragon Lid from the twelfth century consists of a dragon-shaped lid and a body with cloud designs, evoking an image of a dragon among clouds (Fig. 24). Like the *seosu*-shaped incense burners described in *Taiping guangji*, there is a hole inside the lid to allow incense smoke to pass through the body of the dragon and come out of its mouth (Fig. 24-1). All *seosu*-shaped celadon incense burners made in the twelfth century of the Goryeo Dynasty have such structure. In literature and mural paintings of Daoist temples, *seosu* incense burners were placed in spaces where Daoist immortals dwelled as an embodiment of Daoist elements.

42. *Taiping guangji* (*Extensive Records Compiled in the Taiping Era* 太平廣記) contains records and novels, which are excluded from religious accounts and historical books. It includes stories related to Daoist immortals, female celestials, Daoist technologies, and sorcerers.

43. See the following entry for Cui Wei in the “Shenxian” vol. 34 of *Taiping guangji* by Li Fang: “帳前有金爐，爐上有蛟龍鸞鳳龜蛇鸞雀，皆張口噴出香煙，芳芬鬱鬱。”



Figure 23. Section from *Procession of Immortals Paying Homage to the Primordial*, Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127), China. Private Collection of C.C. Wang, U.S.A.



Figure 24. Celadon Incense Burner with Lid in the Shape of a Dragon, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. 22.7 cm. National Museum of Korea, Seoul (duk 5146)



Figure 24-1. The Reverse Side of the Lid of Celadon Incense Burner



Figure 25. Section from *Bestiary of Real and Imaginary Animals*, Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), China. H. 34.5 × W. 744 cm. Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, U.S.A. (F1911.191)

44. *Bestiary of Real and Imaginary Animals* handscroll has a preface “Hundred Spirits of Mountains and Sea” 山海百靈 followed by the images. Moreover, on its outer surface is a title slip bearing an inscription “Painting of exotic beasts by Hu Huai of Tang Dynasty; genuine work of the divine class; first-class” 唐胡懷蕃獸圖真蹟神品 上上, suggesting that the painting is a work by Hu Huai, a late Tang painter, from the Five Dynasties period. However, it is presumed to have been produced during the Ming Dynasty. For the images, see “Bestiary of Real and Imaginary Animals,” Smithsonian Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, accessed February 15, 2021, <https://asia.si.edu/object/F1911.191/>.

The depiction of a Daoist immortal descending on a *nansae* can be observed not only in the celadon ewer at the Art Institute of Chicago, but also in the lyrics of “Hwanggungak” (Fig. 4). Daoist books and paintings from the Tang and Song periods also contain such depictions. According to *Yongcheng jixian lu* (*Record of the Assembled Immortals of Yongcheng* 壩城集仙錄) written by the Daoist master Du Guangting in the late Tang period, Daoist immortals ride different animals like the *bonghwang*, dragon, crane, and heavenly horse.⁴⁵ It further explains that an immortal of the highest rank rides *nansae*, the second highest are carried by *girin*, and the third highest travels by dragon.⁴⁶ *Taiping guangji* published in the early Northern Song period also mentions Daoist immortals riding auspicious beasts.⁴⁷ As Tang and Song literary works describe *seosu* as divine animals that carry Daoist immortals, they were coupled with Daoist realm.

In celadon wares, most *seosu* are portrayed floating on clouds or swimming among waves (Figs. 2, 3, 24, and 26). These portrayals recall auspicious animals that make their ways through clouds or waves to transport Daoist immortals to the human world and the land of the immortals. The Southern Song Dynasty painting *Three Officials on an Inspection Tour* by Ma Lin (1195–active 1264) depicts the Officials of Heaven, Earth, and Water on an inspection tour to discern right from wrong and protect all beings (Fig. 27). The upper section of the painting shows the Official of Heaven riding on a cart pulled by a *girin*. The middle section displays the Official of Earth



Figure 26. Celadon Incense Burner with Lid in the Shape of a Turtle-dragon, 12th century, Goryeo Dynasty. H. 20.4 cm. Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul

riding a lion. The lower section illustrates the Official of Water riding a dragon which pushes its way through waves and clouds.⁴⁸



Figure 27. Ma Lin (1195–active 1264), *Three Officials on an Inspection Tour*, Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279), China. H. 174.2 × W. 122.9 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan

The images of *seosu* (auspicious beasts) depicted in the twelfth-century Goryeo celadons mostly appear in materials related to Daoism. Given that the stories and paintings of Daoist immortals were popular during the Tang and Song Dynasties, *seosu* in celadon were likely perceived as divine animals from the realm of Daoist immortals. The noble literati who strove to emulate the

45. See the following entry for Wang Miaoxiang in the *Yongcheng jixian lu*, vol. 9: “須臾，千乘萬騎，懸空而下，皆乘麒麟鳳龍鶴天馬，人物儀衛數千，人皆長丈餘，持戈戟兵杖，旌幡幢蓋。” See also the following entry for Xie Ziran in the *Yongcheng jixian lu*, vol. 10: “每天使降時，鸞鶴千萬，衆仙畢集，位高者乘鸞，次乘麒麟，次乘龍，鸞鶴每翅各大丈餘。” Both volumes are reprinted in the *Zhengtong Daozeng* (*Daoist Cannon of the Zhengtong Reign Period* 正統道藏), vols. 560–62.

46. Ibid.

47. See the following entry for Magu in the “Nüxian” no. 5 of *Taiping guangji*, vol. 60 by Li Fang: “鼓吹皆乘麟，從天而下，懸集於庭。” See also the following entry for Xie Ziran in the “Nüxian” no. 11 of *Taiping guangji*, vol. 66: “每天使降時，鸞鶴千萬。衆仙畢集，位高者乘鸞，次乘麒麟，次乘龍。”

48. For the image, see *Three Officials on an Inspection Tour* by Ma Lin of Song, National Palace Museum, accessed February 10, 2021, <https://theme.npm.edu.tw/opendata/DigitImageSets.aspx?sNo=04015196>.

Daoist immortals, understood the royal banquets and rituals of the twelfth century as spaces representing the Daoist realm. This preoccupation with Daoist principles, beliefs, and concepts was a dominant notion of the time, and accordingly reflected in the formal elements of objects produced during this period exemplified by the twelfth century Goryeo celadon imbued with *seosu*.⁴⁹

Conclusion

This paper has examined the circumstances surrounding the use of *seosu* (auspicious beasts) iconography in twelfth-century Goryeo celadons and its significance. In the twelfth century, celadon wares were used exclusively by the royal court and the nobility of Goryeo, which enhanced the reputation of Goryeo celadon. The application of various *seosu* images in twelfth-century celadons demonstrates such changes. A wide variety of auspicious animals like the dragon, lion, *girin*, hornless dragon, turtle-dragon, fish-dragon, sea horse, rhinoceros, *bonghwang*, and *nansae* were used to decorate particular types of vessels, such as the incense burner, large basins or bowls, the *maebyeong*, ewer, brush rack, and water dropper.

During the reign of King Yejong, there was a rapid increase in the number of Daoist rituals, and royal banquet culture took on Daoist characteristics as they were based on Daoist principles and beliefs. *Seosu* not only carried Daoist connotations of eulogy, eternal youth, longevity, and a peaceful and prosperous reign of the king, but also served as a visual representation of good omens from heaven and a political means to symbolize the king's dignity and benevolent rule. Thus, as the Goryeo royal court progressively adopted a Daoist disposition and gained a deeper understanding of Confucian scriptures in the twelfth century, elements such as *seosu* became the iconographic expression of the king's authority represented on celadons of Goryeo.

Translated by Yegee KWON

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49. Such atmosphere can be read in the entry for Choi Dang in the "Jesin" no. 12 of "Yeoljeon" vol. 99 of *Goryeosa*. The original text is as follows: "...逍遙自適. 時人謂之地上仙, 圖形刻石, 傳於世."

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Goryeo celadon, as well as issues of influence and exchange in the relationship between Goryeo celadon and Chinese porcelain or metalware. She is currently conducting research on the influx of Goryeo celadon in the United States and Europe during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and its effect on the Western perceptions and evaluations of Korean ceramics.

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Abstract

In the twelfth-century Goryeo, celadons began to be used by the royal court and the noble, which enhanced the reputation of celadons. The iconography of diverse *seosu* (auspicious beasts) employed in the twelfth-century celadon wares is indicative of such enhanced reputation of celadons. A wide variety of auspicious animals, including the dragon, lion, *girin*, hornless dragon, turtle-dragon, fish-dragon, sea horse, rhinoceros, *bonghwang*, and *nansae* decorated particular types of vessels, such as incense burner, large basin, large bowl, *maebyeong*, ewer, brush rack, and water dropper. Despite being mythical animals, the actual appearance of *seosu* was perceived as a sign of good omens from heaven and an emblem of a peaceful and prosperous era. The *seosu* iconography is presumed to have been employed to adorn the spaces designed for Daoism-oriented royal banquets or rituals. In Goryeo of the twelfth century, the royal court strongly advocated Daoism and acquired a deep understanding of Confucian scriptures. As a result, elements such as *seosu* became the iconographic expression of the king's authority represented on celadons of Goryeo.

Keywords: Goryeo celadon, Daoism, *seosu* (auspicious beasts), era of peace and prosperity, good omen