



THE ANALECTS OF DASAN

VOLUME I

A Korean Syncretic Reading

Translated with Commentary by
HONGKYUNG KIM

紅諭
 嘉慶十八年
 余適居
 小為書于
 寄敝裙上
 餘為小障以
 不愛止
 年之既
 庭梅有

The Analects of Dasan, Volume 1

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Dasan composed *Plum and Birds*, the artwork on the cover, to encourage his daughter to be loyal to her family-in-law. It was 1813, the thirteenth year of his eighteen-year exile, when he completed *Noneo gogeuju*. The poem in its entirety (including the part obscured in the design of the cover) reads:

*Two birds, fluttering, rest on a plum tree in my garden
They flew in, mesmerized by its permeating fragrance, and
Would stay and nestle here to please your family
Full-blown flowers should lead to an abundance of fruit*

According to Dasan's explanation of the image, the "canvas" he painted it on was made out of a faded red silk skirt that his wife, Lady Hong, sent to him one day in the midst of his exile. This image was provided by the Korea University Museum.

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My research project on *Noneo gogeuju*—or *The Analects of Dasan*, as it is referred to in this book—was resumed when I received a grant from the Academy of Korean Studies in 2013. It was part of their series of One Hundred Korean Classics. In fact, *Noneo gogeuju* was not initially included among the books in this series probably because it is so voluminous and complex. I suggested that it be included, and the Academy accepted my suggestion. The grant proposal stipulated that I finish the translation of the entire text with my commentary in six volumes over six years. This book, its first volume, is the result of my work in the first year. I am humbled by the fact that my research on Dasan's interpretation of the *Analects* could only be completed after gaining financial support from the Academy. It would be shameful to pretend that it was only my love for Dasan that made this publication possible. So it is with great humility that I express my respect for him here, and how great a pleasure and inspiration it has been to read his *Analects* and attempt to understand his thought.

Besides the generous support from the Academy of Korean Studies, I also received various kinds of help from Ms. Lucy Randall, a member of the Oxford University Press. I met her in the 2015 American Philosophy Association Eastern Division Meeting in Philadelphia, where I presented an article on Dasan's *Analects*. It was my first contact with the publisher for this project, which was followed by much fruitful correspondence. The anonymous peer reviews also proved productive, whose authors deserve my many thanks as well. Douglas Hong has been my personal editor since the first year of the project, serving even now in that role as I continue to work on the third volume of the *Analects of Dasan*. He is in the Cultural Studies doctoral program at Stony Brook University and extremely talented. Without his support, this project would undoubtedly have proceeded at a snail's pace. Also, I would like to mention my colleagues who read my manuscript to correct my errors and provide supplementary information that has helped bring this book closer to the vision that inspired it. They include: Eon-jong Kim from Korea University, Hong-sik Park from Daegu Haany University, Yeong-ho Kim from Youngsan University, Seon-hui Kim from

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The Analects of Dasan, Volume 1

| Introduction

1

Dasan 茶山, “a tea mountain,” was the pen name of the Korean Confucian scholar whose reading of the *Analects* provides the subject of this book. To follow the old Confucian style of introducing a highly respected person: he was a member of the twenty-third generation of the Jeong 丁 family, whose ancestral seat was Naju 羅州 (originally Aphae 押海), and the two characters *yak* 若 and *yong* 鏞 constituted his personal name. His full name was Jeong Yak-yong (1762–1836). He is also remembered by various pen names besides Dasan, including Yeolsu 洌水, Sammija 三眉子, Yeoyudang 與猶堂, Tak-ong 鐸翁, and Sa-am 俟菴. Yeolsu, “the Yeol water,” refers to the Han River, in whose upper region he was born and interred. Sammija, “the master with three eyebrows,” suggests how he was distinguished from others, not only by a scar that smallpox left him with but also by his talents. Yeoyudang, “a hall of hesitation,” attests to his awareness of certain dangers during a stage of his life that caused him to confine himself, as it were, in hesitation. Tak-ong, “an old man on a bamboo mat,” may signify the abject conditions in which he lived. Finally, Sa-am, derived from a passage in *Constant Mean*,¹ connotes his confidence in understanding people.

All the pen names paint a picture of Dasan’s life. He was born into a family of the Southerners faction that, generation after generation, lived in the vicinity of the capital around the Han River and with which he was affiliated for the entirety of his life.² He was undoubtedly an outstanding scholar. He

¹ Two passages in *Constant Mean* pertain to the character *sa* 俟 (to wait). The line pertinent to it in the first passage reads: “Therefore, the noble person stays calm, waiting [俟] for the appointments of Heaven” (*Zhong yong zhangju* 中庸章句, 9b); The line in the second passage reads: “The noble person is not bewildered, even when he waits [俟] for one hundred generations for sages to come. This shows that he understands human beings” (25a).

² The scholars of the Southerners faction constituted an important wing of the Silhak 實學 (Practical Learning) movement, including Yu Hyeong-won 柳馨遠 (1622–1673) and Yi Ik 李穡 (1681–1763). Yi Ik was successful in forming his own school in the Ansan 安山 area, from which many great scholars in the movement of Practical Learning emerged, such as An Jeong-bok 安鼎福 (1712–1791), Yi Gahwan 李家煥 (1742–1801), and Gwon Cheol-sin 權哲身 (1736–1801). Dasan once stated that he was deeply inspired by the works of Yi Ik, who expressed wishes to carry on the legacy of Yu’s scholarship. Meanwhile, Yu Hyeong-won revered Heo Mok 許穆 (1595–1682), whose master was Jeong Gu 鄭逵 (1543–1620), one of the major disciples of Yi Hwang 李滉 (1502–1571).

was targeted by his rivals and victimized in the first grand-scale persecution of Joseon Catholics in 1801, as a result of which he was banished. He must have endured a scarcity of resources, especially right after his banishment.³ Despite all of the hardships he had to face, he was confident that he was passing down his understanding of the Way to the next one hundred generations. However, he is usually remembered by the pen name Dasan, because most of his major works, including his *Analects*, were either drafted or finished during his eighteen-year exile, for ten years of which (1808–1818) he stayed in a “grass hut” by a small mountain full of tea trees.⁴ Ironically, he rarely used this pen name to identify himself, probably because it brought up memories of pain and frustration that he experienced from the deaths of loved ones, the ruin of his family, political atrocities, widespread poverty, and unrealized dreams. Thus the world is still harsh to him because in its memory, it forces him to remain in exile.

The following chronology of Dasan’s life will aid in reading my entire translation and commentary on his *Noneo gogeum ju* 論語古今註.⁵

June 1763: Dasan was born to a family that belonged both to the class of Confucian bureaucrats and to the Southerners faction, which was deeply involved in the factional strife of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Joseon. His father, Jeong Jae-won 丁載遠 (1730–1792), had retired just before Dasan’s birth from a low-level government post to express his grief over the tragic execution in May of the crown prince, Sado 思悼 (1735–1762), by his own father, King Yeongjo 英祖 (r. 1724–1776). Dasan’s mother was a descendant of the Haenam 海南 Yun 尹 family, which was honored for the accomplishments of Yun Seon-do 尹善道 (1587–1671), a great master of Korean literature and a key participant in the factional strife. When Dasan was born his father had just returned to his hometown, so he gave Dasan the childhood name Gwinong 歸農: “returning to the farming area.”

1768: It is said that Dasan started composing poems in this year and that his early poems were later compiled into *Sammija jip* 三眉子集 (*Collected Works of the Master with Three Eyebrows*), a title associated with a scar on his eyebrows.

1770: Dasan’s mother, lady Yun, passed away. Since Dasan was her youngest son, his eldest brother’s wife, lady Yi 李, began to take care of Dasan like a mother. Yi Byeok 李蘖 (1754–1786), an ardent Catholic who introduced Catholicism to Dasan, was her younger brother.

³ During the first five years of his exile, Dasan stayed in a small inn near the east gate of the town Gangjin 康津.

⁴ Dasan is regarded as one of the founders of Korean tea culture.

⁵ Secondary sources in English on Dasan’s life include Mark Setton, *Chŏng Yagyong: Korea’s Challenge to Orthodox Neo-Confucianism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 53–66, and Choi Byonghyon, *Admonitions on Governing the People* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), xvi–xxvi.

- 1776: Dasan received an adult name, Yak-yong, following the capping ceremony reserved for all sons of bureaucratic families. He married a girl from the Pungsan 豊山 Hong 洪 family.
- 1777–1782: Dasan studied the Confucian classics, literature, and history, while receiving indirect or direct instruction from eminent scholars in the Southerners faction, including Yi Ik, Gwon Cheol-sin, and Yi Ga-hwan.
- 1783: Dasan entered Seonggyungwan 成均館, the national Confucian academy. He also had an audience, for the first time, with King Jeongjo 正祖 (r. 1776–1800), the son of the executed Sado and Dasan’s “forever-lord,” after he passed the literary licentiate examination.
- 1784: Dasan dedicated to King Jeongjo *Jungyong gang-ui* 中庸講義 (*Discussions on the Meaning of Constant Mean*), which later developed into *Jungyong gang-ui bo* 中庸講義補 (*Supplementation of the Discussions on the Meaning of Constant Mean*, six rolls), in response to the king’s request. In April, Dasan learned about the tenets of Catholicism for the first time from Yi Byeok at a memorial service for the fourth anniversary of the death of his eldest brother’s wife. He started reading about Catholic teachings.
- 1785–1789: Achieving many minor successes in the academy, Dasan continued to study at Seonggyungwan until he passed the national civil service examination in March 1789. Afterward he was invited to join a group of specially selected civil officers for in-depth study of Confucian statecraft and literature. He also transcribed his dialogues with King Jeongjo about *Great Learning*, later compiled into *Daehak gang-ui* 大學講義 (*Discussions on the Meaning of Great Learning*, one roll). In addition, Jeongjo gave special recognition to his proposal to build a boat-bridge across the Han River for the royal procession.
- 1790: Dasan experienced exile for the first time, though very briefly, due to his confrontation with the Patriarchs faction, the dominant faction at the time.
- 1791: Dasan’s *Sigyeong gang-ui* 詩經講義 (*Discussions on the Meaning of Classic of Poetry*, later finalized into twelve rolls) was praised greatly by Jeongjo. In the winter the so-called Jinsan 珍山 Incident occurred, in which two Confucian Christians in the county of Jinsan burned and buried their ancestors’ spiritual tablets, in compliance with the pope’s order that all Christians should disobey the Confucian ancestral rituals. The incident triggered the first wave of persecution of Joseon Catholics. One of the two offenders was a nephew of Dasan’s mother. In later writings, Dasan recalls that he was appalled by their aggressive actions and thus severed his ties to Catholicism this year.
- 1792: Obeying the Confucian ritual protocols, Dasan resigned from his position in order to mourn his father’s death. He continued, however, to help materialize Jeongjo’s plan to restore prince Sado’s honor by submitting to him his designs for the Hwaseong 華城 fortress, a

commemorative monument for Sado, along with a blueprint of a stationary crane to be used for its construction.

1794: Dasan returned to the court after fulfilling his ritual duties for his deceased father. Months later, Jeongjo sent him to Gyeonggi 京畿 province to inspect the atrocities of the local governor and magistrates. Dasan's bold censure of the province's inhumane administration led to the discharge of its governor, Seo Yong-bo 徐龍輔 (1757–1824).

1795–1799: Dasan served the dynasty primarily as a main third-rank official in various offices within the court, when he was not prevented from doing so, or as a local magistrate, when suspicions and criticism against him arose.

1800: Early in the year, Dasan stepped down from his office because of imminent dangers he could sense. On June 28, the demise of Jeongjo was announced. At the conclusion of the weeping period for the deceased king, Dasan returned to his hometown. He then named a study hall the “Hall of Hesitation.”

1801: In January, Dowager Jeongsun 貞純 (1745–1805) issued a royal edict to ban the “wicked teaching”—Catholicism. In the same month, Jeong Yak-jong 丁若鍾 (1760–1801), Dasan's third older brother, was caught by the authorities when he tried secretly to remove books and letters related to activities of the Joseon Catholics from his house. In February, Dasan was arrested and interrogated by high officials, including Seo Yong-bo. He was eventually punished with exile to Janggi 長鬐; his second older brother, Jeong Yak-jeon 丁若銓 (1758–1816), was banished to Sinji 薪智 Island. Jeong Yak-jong was executed. In October, Dasan and Jeong Yak-jeon were again summoned to the court for another round of interrogation in connection with the arrest of Hwang Sa-yeong 黃嗣永 (1775–1801), a son-in-law of Dasan's eldest brother, who had dared to write a letter to a bishop in China requesting a dispatch of the French navy to show off their military power to the Joseon court. In November, Dasan was banished to Gangjin, a small provincial town, where he would stay for the following eighteen years, while Jeong Yak-jeon was sent to Heuksan 黑山 Island.

1802: Although he had written *Yi-a sul* 爾雅述 (*An Exposition of Er ya*) and compiled local proverbs into *Baek-eon si* 百諺詩 (*Poems of One Hundred Proverbs*), which later developed into *Idam sokchan* 耳談續纂 (*A Sequel to The Stories Heard by Ears*), in 1801 when he was in Janggi, this year he began to conduct scholarly research and to write on a large scale, according to his recollections.

1803: Dasan concentrated his research on the Confucian mourning rituals, which resulted in the writing of a crucial part of *Sangrye sajeon* 喪禮四箋 (*Four Commentaries on the Mourning Rituals*, fifty rolls).

1804: The Gapja 甲子 edition of *Juyeok sajeon* 周易四箋 (*Four Commentaries on Changes of Zhou*, eight rolls) and *Ahak pyeon* 兒學編 (*A Text for Children's Learning*) were completed.

- 1805: In the summer, Dasan completed “Jeongche jeonjung byeon 正體傳重辨” (Discourse on Legitimacy in Royal Succession, three rolls), which advocated the Southerners’ stance in the Rites Controversy under the reign of King Sukjong 肅宗 (r. 1674–1720). In the winter, Dasan was able to move from a small inn to the Goseongsa 高聲寺 temple, thanks to his acquaintance with the Buddhist monk Hyejang 惠藏 (1768–?). The revised Eulchuk 乙丑 edition of *Juyeok sajeon* (eight rolls) was completed there.
- 1806: In the fall, Dasan moved to the home of one of his local students in the town of Gangjin. He completed part of *Sangrye sajeon* and the revised Byeong-in 丙寅 edition of *Juyeok sajeon* (sixteen rolls).
- 1807: Dasan completed *Sangrye sajeon* and the revised *Jeongmyo* 丁卯 edition of *Juyeok sajeon*.
- 1808: In the spring, Dasan moved to a house near the Dasan (Tea Mountain) provided by Yun Dan 尹傳 (1744–1821), a descendant of the Haenam Yun family. Dasan completed the Mujin 戊辰 edition of *Juyeok sajeon* (also known as *Juyeok simjeon* 周易心箋, twenty-four rolls) and *Yeokhak seo-eon* 易學緒言 (*Initiatory Words on the Studies of Changes*, twelve rolls).
- 1809: Dasan completed *Sangrye oepyeon* 喪禮外篇 (*Outer Compilation of the Mourning Rituals*, twelve rolls). *Sigyeong gang-ui* (twelve rolls) was finalized.
- 1810: Dasan completed *Sigyeong gang-ui bo* 詩經講義補 (*Supplementation of the Discussions on the Meaning of Classic of Poetry*, three rolls), *Gwallye jak-ui* 冠禮酌儀 (*Protocols of Offering Wines in the Capping Rituals*), *Garye jak-ui* 嘉禮酌儀 (*Protocols of Offering Wines in the Rituals of Royal Weddings*), and *Sohak jucheon* 小學珠串 (*Threaded Beads for Lesser Learners*), as well as *Maessi Sangseo pyeong* 梅氏尙書平 (*Fair Discussions on Documents of Mei Ze*, nine rolls) and *Sangseo gohun* 尙書古訓 (*Ancient Meaning of Documents*, six rolls).
- 1811: Dasan completed *Sangseo jiwon rok* 尙書知遠錄 (*A Record of Documents’ Understanding of the Ancient Affairs*, nine rolls) and *Abang gangyeok go* 我邦疆域考 (*Investigations on the Territory of Our Country*, ten rolls).
- 1812: Dasan completed *Minbo ui* 民堡議 (*Discussions on the People’s Fortress*, two rolls) and *Chunchu gojing* 春秋考徵 (*Veritable Investigations of Spring and Autumn*, twelve rolls).
- 1813: Dasan completed *Noneo gogeu ju* 論語古今註 (*Old and New Commentaries on the Analects*, forty rolls).
- 1814: Dasan completed *Maengja yo-ui* 孟子要義 (*Essential Meaning of Mencius*, nine rolls), *Daehak gong-ui* 大學公義 (*Fair Discussions on Great Learning*, three rolls), *Jungyong jajam* 中庸自箴 (*Self-Admonition of Constant Mean*, three rolls), *Jungyong gang-ui bo*, and *Daedong sugyeong* 大東水經 (*Critical Waters in the Great Eastern State*, two rolls).

- 1815: Dasan completed *Simgyeong milheom* 心經密驗 (*Esoteric Examination of Classic of Mind-Heart*, one roll) and *Sohak ji-eon* 小學枝言 (*Complementary Words on Lesser Learning*, one roll).
- 1816: Dasan completed *Akseogojon* 樂書孤存 (*Sole Preservation of the Books of Music*, twelve rolls).
- 1817: Dasan completed *Sang-ui jeolyo* 喪儀節要 (*Essential Summary of the Protocols of Mourning*, six rolls). He also started writing *Bangrye chobon* 邦禮草本 (*Drafted Edition of the Rites of Our Country*, later published as *Gyeongse yupyo* 經世遺表, forty-four rolls), and *Mongmin simseo* 牧民心書 (*Treasured Book of Nurturing the People*, forty-eight rolls).
- 1818: In the spring, Dasan completed *Mongmin simseo*. In the summer, he completed *Gukjo jeollye go* 國朝典禮考 (*Investigations on the Cardinal Rituals of Our Dynasty*, three rolls). On September 30 he was released from exile, and he returned to his home the following month. In the winter, he and his students formed the Society of Tea and Letters [茶信契].
- 1819: Dasan completed *Heumheum sinseo* 欽欽新書 (*New Book of Judicial Prudence*, thirty rolls) and *A-eon gakbi* 雅言覺非 (*Realization of the Errors in the Everyday Terminologies*, three rolls).
- 1820–1832: Dasan enjoyed the most leisurely period in his life, composing poems, having scholarly discussions with colleagues, and traveling. In 1822, he wrote two versions of “Self-Written Epitaph [自撰墓誌銘]” in celebration of his sixtieth birthday: the shorter one for burial and the longer one for the collection of his writings.
- 1833: *Sangseo gohun* and *Sangseo jiwon rok*, 1810 edition, were compiled into *Sangseo gohun*, twenty-one rolls. *Maessi Sangseo pyeong* was also revised.
- February 22, 1836: Dasan passed away. The date marked the sixtieth anniversary of his marriage. His body was buried behind the Hall of Hesitation.⁶

2

Dasan is one of the most revered cultural heroes in Korea today. Not only have streets, buildings, and parks in Korea been named after him, but the provincial government in Dasan’s hometown has also recently announced that it will build “a green environment-friendly new city following the ideas of Dasan,” to be named Dasan. Taking advantage of his reputation, the local government plans to sell numerous apartment units to Korean citizens. The city of Seoul also operates a municipal service for “answering all questions” that is named

⁶ This chronology is based on Gyu-yeong Jeong, *Sa-am seonsaeng yeonbo* 俟菴先生年譜 (Seoul: Jeongmun sa, 1984). It was initially published in 1921 in traditional book binding and recently translated into Korean. See Gyu-yeong Jeong, *Dasan-ui han pyeongsang: Sa-am seonsaeng yeonbo* trans. Jae-so Song (Paju si, Changbi, 2014).

the Dasan Call Center, because Koreans tend to regard Dasan as the most knowledgeable individual of traditional Korea.

Dasan's reputation, however, is relatively modern. Although two major works of sociopolitical analysis by him, *Heumheum sinseo* and *Mongmin simseo*, were printed during the imperial age of Korea under the auspices of Emperor Gwangmu 光武 (r. 1863–1907, King Gojong 高宗 prior to 1897) in 1901 and 1902, respectively,⁷ he remained underestimated by the majority of Korean scholars until the 1930s because he lacked philosophical appeal to either the mainstream Confucian scholars or the rising tide of young intellectuals: he criticized mainstream Confucians for sacrificing so much to defend the legitimacy of neo-Confucianism, but he was one of those same Confucian scholars in the eyes of the young proponents of the modernity projects in Korea.

The historical context changed significantly in 1931, when Singan hoe 新幹會, the unified pan-Korean organization struggling for independence, disintegrated. Afterward a certain nationalist group that dissociated itself from leftists responded to an urgent need to restore the nation's dignity by proving the eminence of Korean history and culture, in order eventually to regain national sovereignty. It was a Korean reaction to the aggressive efforts of Japanese imperialists to degrade Korean tradition, which was later dubbed the Joseon studies [朝鮮學] movement. The leading scholars in this movement—including An Jae-hong (1891–1965), Jeong In-bo (1893–?), Baek Nam-un (1894–1979), and Mun Il-pyeong (1888–1939)—did not wish to link Korea's intellectual tradition so closely with neo-Confucianism, so they naturally turned their attention to cultural and scholarly accomplishments made by “outsiders” to Joseon academia. Dasan's works attracted their interest.

In 1938 a Korean publisher, Sinjoseon sa 新朝鮮社, finished printing a multivolume set of Dasan's writings in their entirety, under the title *Yeoyudang jeonseo* 與猶堂全書 (*Entire Works of Yeoyudang*), four years after the first volume was printed. This achievement would not have been possible without the assiduous dedication of the owner of the company, Kwon Tae-hwi.⁸ This monumental and inspiring Sinjoseon sa edition of *Yeoyudang jeonseo* (Sinjo edition hereafter) consisted of 154 volumes in seven collections, which were published in seventy-six books in modern book binding (a collection of poetry and essays

⁷ During this period, three more of Dasan's works were printed, including *Idam sokchan* in around 1902, *Daehan gangyeok go* 大韓疆域考 [我邦疆域考] in 1903, and *Ahak pyeon* in 1908. In 1914, the last part of Dasan's trilogy on sociopolitical reformation, *Gyeongse yupyo* (*A Bequeathed Treatise on Government*), was printed. Prior to the publication of his major works, manuscript copies were made of selections from his works for preservation and reading. The first compilation of Dasan's entire oeuvre must have been completed under his direction even before his death, although it is unclear whether it contained every one of his works.

⁸ Much of Kwon's life is unclear. What we do know is that he was a student of An Jae-hong and later joined a Korean communist organization. Kim Han-kyeong, a descendant of Dasan's maternal family, was also an active member of this organization. He and Choe Ik-hwan later established a branch office of the Korean Communist Party in Japan. Kim Seong-jin, Han-kyeong's father, was in charge of the publication of *Yeoyudang jeonseo*. See Bo-reum Kim, “*Yeoyudang jip* seongnip e gwanhan gochal,” *Dasan hak* 18 (2011): 197–235.

in twenty-six volumes; a collection of writings on Confucian classics in fifty volumes; a collection of writings on rituals in twenty-five volumes; a collection of writings on music in four volumes; a collection of writings on administration and laws in thirty-nine volumes; a collection of writings on geography in eight volumes; and a collection of medical studies in six volumes). Readers were excited about this “new excavation” and hoped to hear from experts about how Dasan contributed to the distinction of Korea’s long intellectual tradition. The responses of leading scholars of the Joseon studies movement to this demand were in agreement with Jeong In-bo’s claim that “our research on the one man Dasan definitely represents our research on the history of Joseon and on Korean near-modern thought.”⁹ In 1936, amid the ongoing publication of Dasan’s works, these scholars began to shed much-needed light on Dasan’s life and philosophy. Following the completion of the publication, Choe Ik-hwan (1897–?) wrote a series of interpretative essays on *Yeoyudang jeonseo*, sixty-five in total, which were later integrated into the publication of the first modern monograph on Dasan.¹⁰ His essays provide crucial information on the collection: that the structure of *Yeoyudang jeonseo*, in which Dasan’s poems and essays appear first, before his commentaries on the Confucian classics, mirrors neither that of “Self-Written Epitaph” nor that of “the Complete Table of Contents of *Yeolsu jeonseo* [洌水全書總目錄],” which was attached to the final drafted edition of *Yeoyudang Jeonseo*; in line with this, Dasan apparently opted for “Yeolsu,” his pen name associated with his hometown, as the title of the collection; and the base manuscript was marked with the title *Yeoyudang jip* 與猶堂集, not *Yeoyudang jeonseo*.¹¹ Notwithstanding the textual disputes surrounding the Sinjo edition, scholarly research on Dasan continued, owing to the Sinjo edition’s merits.

At the early stages of research in Korea on Dasan, the understanding of Jang Jiyeon (1864–1921) of Dasan’s scholarship was definitive.¹² In his book *Joseon Yukyo yeonwon* 朝鮮儒教淵源, Jang distinguished Dasan (along with Yu Hyeong-won) from mainstream neo-Confucian scholars for his expertise in matters of government and people’s welfare. Although Jang also recognized

⁹ In-bo Jeong, “Yu-ilhan jeongbeopga Jeong Dasan seonsaeng seoron (1),” *Dong-A ilbo*, September 1934, 10. Also see In-bo Jeong, “Dasan seonsaeng ui saeng-ae wa sasang,” in *Damwon gukhak sango* (Seoul: Mungyo sa, 1955), 70–108.

¹⁰ Ik-hwan Choe, *Silhak pa wa Jeong Dasan* (1955; reprint, Seoul: Cheongnyeon sa, 1989).

¹¹ Ik-hwan Choe, “*Yeoyudang jeonseo* reul dokham (15),” *Dong-A Ilbo*, February 1939, 3. Also see Choe, *Silhak pa-wa Jeong Dasan*, 450–455. Some argue that *Yeoyudang jeonseo* should be revised so that it follows either the structure of “Self-Written Epitaph” (Seong-eul Jo and Mun-sik Kim) or that of “Complete Table of Contents of *Yeolsu jeonseo*” (Dong-u Jang). See Seong-eul Jo, *Yeoyudang jip ui munheonhak jeok yeongu—siyul mit jammun ui yeondae gojeong eul jungsim euro* (Seoul: Hye-an, 2004); Mun-sik Kim, “*Yeoyudang jeonseo* gyeongjip cheje ui geomto,” *Dasan hak* 5 (2004): 385–411; and Dong-u Jang, “*Yeoyudang jeonseo* jeongbon sa-eop eul wihan pilsabon yeongu—gyeongjip eul jungsim euro,” *Dasan hak* 7 (2005): 251–289.

¹² Yong-ha Sin accentuates Jang’s contribution to the “excavation” of Dasan. See Yong-ha Sin, “19 segi mal Jang Ji-yeon ui Dasan Jeong Yak-yong ui balgul,” *Hanguk hakbo* 29, no. 1 (2003): 2–21. Alongside Jang Ji-yeon, Hyun Chae (1856–1925) and Yi Geon-bang (1861–1939) belong to the earliest group of scholars who excavated Dasan.

Dasan as an established scholar in Confucian classical studies and literature, what set him apart, for Jang, were his views on sociopolitical issues.¹³ The leading scholars of the Joseon studies movement also highlighted the practicality of Dasan's reformative ideas. While all these scholars adopted the notion *sil* 實 (practicality) in defining Dasan's scholarly achievements, Choe Nam-seon (1890–1957) used an existing term, *silhak* (practical learning), to describe the sociopolitical work of a larger group of scholars, including Dasan, who are now referred to as scholars of Practical Learning (Silhak).¹⁴ All of the pioneering articles written by Yun Yong-kyun (1903–1931), Jeong In-bo, and An Jae-hong were dedicated to revealing the significance of Dasan's scholarship in the same context. The first monograph on Dasan, by Choe Ik-hwan, likewise focused on Dasan's trilogy on social reform rather than his other works, although it purported to be an integral introduction of Dasan and Practical Learning. As for South Korean scholarship, Hong I-seop opened a new horizon in 1959 by publishing a book on Dasan's political and economic thought, an elaboration of this pervasive understanding of Dasan's work.¹⁵

Although Han U-geun raised questions about the ambiguity of the term *silhak*, since it was used sometimes to refer to Confucianism itself,¹⁶ no substantial argument was ever made against the perspective of Dasan's work as a crystallization of the movement of Practical Learning. Indeed, Dasan's readers were delighted by the even bolder suggestion of linking his ideas with modernity, proposed initially by Cheon Gwan-u in a public lecture in 1967,¹⁷ since they sought a vernacular origin for modern establishments in Korea's philosophical tradition. Yi U-seong attempted to help people understand the complexity of the ideas of Practical Learning by placing the leading scholars in this intellectual movement in three different categories: the school of government and social merits, the school of economic development and betterment of people's lives, and the school of scholarly investigations of actual things.¹⁸ In Yi's view, which has been adopted for Korean secondary education textbooks, Dasan made complete the ideas of the school of government and social merits. On the other hand, Yi Eul-ho uniquely focused on Dasan's research on the Confucian classics, including *Noneo gogeum ju*, in this period when Dasan's sociopolitical proposals were emphasized.¹⁹ He should be given credit for starting the discussion of Dasan's interpretation of the classical texts, a discussion to which this book is more closely related. However, Yi Eul-ho, despite his

¹³ Ji-yeon Jang, *Joseon Yukyo yeonwon* (Seoul: Hoedong seogwan, 1922), 128–129.

¹⁴ Hong-sik Park, "Ilje ganggeomgi Jeong In-bo, An Jae-hong, Choe Ik-hwan ui Dasan yeongu," *Dasan hak* 17 (2010): 45–93.

¹⁵ I-seop Hong, *Jeong Yak-yong ui jeongchi gyeongje sasang yeongu* (Seoul: Hanguk yeongu doseogwan, 1959).

¹⁶ U-geun Han, "Yijo Silhak ui gaenyeom e daehayeo," *Jindan hakhoe* 15 (1958): 25–46.

¹⁷ This lecture was later published in a book. See Gwan-u Cheon, "Joseon hugi Silhak ui gaenyeom jaeron," in *Hanguksa ui jaebalgyeon*, ed. Gwan-u Cheon (Seoul: Iljo gak, 1974), 107–185.

¹⁸ U-seong Yi, "Silhak yeongu seoseol," in *Silhak yeongu immun*, ed. Yeoksa hakhoe (Seoul: Iljo gak, 1973), 1–17.

¹⁹ Eul-ho Yi, *Dasan gyeonghak sasang yeongu* (Seoul: Eul-yu munhwa sa, 1966).

unique association with one of the branches of the study of Dasan's works, was like other scholars in that he wished to separate Dasan from the neo-Confucian tradition, characterizing Dasan's entire classical studies as a return to "the learning by Zhu-Si 洙泗 waters" (where Confucius taught his disciples). All in all, earlier Korean scholars agreed that the movement of Practical Learning (the only major intellectual current opposed to neo-Confucianism in Joseon's intellectual history) culminated in Dasan's writings, which impressively enriched the literature of the country.

As a matter of fact, it is truly challenging now to summarize Korean scholarship on Dasan precisely because there is an awe-inspiring number of monographs and articles about Dasan. Through them, scholars have attempted to convince readers of their new "discoveries" of various aspects of Dasan. The Foundation of Dasan's Scholarship and Culture, for example, provides a list more than eighty pages long of scholarly works on Dasan. Recent discourse on Dasan, however, seems to reflect three changes from early Korean scholarship on the topic. First, the conventional conception of Dasan's philosophy as exemplary of Practical Learning has faced counter-arguments from relatively young scholars. They tend to emphasize continuity and mutual influence among various philosophies in the late Joseon period. As a result of this challenge, it now seems crude to locate Dasan exclusively in the orbit of anti-neo-Confucianism or intellectual defiance of neo-Confucian orthodoxy.²⁰ Second, while Dasan's sociopolitical views still form the basis of his high reputation among readers, a growing number of scholars have found that his classical studies yield more insights about his philosophical inspirations than they originally anticipated. Given that a larger portion of Dasan's writings concerns Confucian classics, this trend will likely continue unabated, and a quantitative growth of articles and monographs dedicated to illuminating Dasan's classical studies is now evident. Third, today's researchers on Dasan have specialized in narrowly defined topics rather than drawing grand conclusions. This is only natural, given the circumstances in Korea, where widely available information on Dasan renders it easy to take one's overall familiarity with Dasan's works for granted. This book has been shaped by the new Korean scholarship, as is evident in my approach to Dasan's scrupulous studies of the *Analects*. My task will be to show how Dasan's works attempted to synthesize all past Confucian commentaries and the philosophical ideas contained therein.

3

The original title of Dasan's commentary on the *Analects* is *Noneo gogeuim ju*, which translates to the *Old and New Commentaries on the Analects*. *Ju* 註 in the title appears as *ju* 注 in an earlier edition without bearing a different meaning.

²⁰ For example, see Yeong-u Han et al., *Dasi, Silhak-iran muet-inga* (Seoul: Pureun yeoksa, 2007).

In this book, I use the former ideogram because I have based my translation on the Sinjo edition, the first printed edition of *Noneo gogeuju*.

Needless to say, there must have been at least one base manuscript for the Sinjo edition. In this regard, many accept Jeong In-bo's claim that the base manuscript for the Sinjo edition was the alleged "finalized" manuscript of *Yeoyudang jeonseo* that was preserved by Jeong Gyu-yeong 丁奎英 (1872–1927), Dasan's great-great-grandson, who was known to have risked his own life to save it from a flood in 1925, was the base edition for the publication.²¹ The so-called finalized manuscript, however, seems to have later been owned by several people, who each had a different part.²² It is unclear how closely these fragmentary manuscripts resembled the real "finalized one." Thus, it would be safer to say that scholars have not yet discovered the one that was actually used for printing the Sinjo edition.²³ As for the manuscript of *Noneo gogeuju*, Kyujanggak 奎章閣 at Seoul National University is the only place in Korea that has it. The entire Kyujanggak edition of *Yeoyudang jeonseo*, including *Noneo gogeuju*, is evidently the result of careful reflection on Dasan's revisions of the earliest manuscript. This is confirmed by a comparison of the Kyujanggak edition with an earlier manuscript that contains Dasan's marginal notes for revision.²⁴ In other words, the Kyujanggak edition of *Noneo gogeuju* seems to be, in effect, a revision of the earliest manuscript, based on Dasan's instructions in his marginal notes. Another manuscript that includes a complete version of *Noneo gogeuju* may be found in the Osaka Municipal Library in Japan, but scholars have conjectured that it might be a copy of the Kyujanggak edition. In addition to these manuscripts, *Noneo sucha* 論語手筈 (*Brief Notes on the Analects*) is worth mentioning since it is an abridged version of *Noneo gogeuju*. It is currently preserved in two manuscripts, one in Kyujanggak and one in the Asami Collection at the University of California, Berkeley.

As already mentioned, it took the publisher four years to completely publish the Sinjo edition. Lacking adequate financial resources, the publisher was initially able to print only two volumes per month out of the full set of seventy-six. They could only acquire funds for publishing the next two volumes by selling the volumes they had just printed. This pattern recurred in four crisis-ridden years, including the year that compelled them to put the project on hold temporarily until they found a donor. Given the logistical challenges, it

²¹ See In-bo Jeong, *Damwon munrok* 4 in *Damwon Jeong In-bo jeonjip*, vol. 5 (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1983), 376–377. More precisely, the Sinjo edition might have been directly derived from an edition that was made from a transcription of the finalized edition when an unknown person attempted to publish the *Yeoyudang jeonseo* in 1926.

²² See Yeong-ho Kim, "Yeoyudang jeonseo ui text geomto," in Jeong Dasan yeongu ui hyeonhwang, ed. U-geun Han et al. (Seoul: Min-eum sa, 1985), 11–41.

²³ Four parties are believed to preserve parts of the earlier manuscript of *Yeoyudang jeonseo*: the Academy of Korean Studies, Kyujanggak (the royal library of Joseon dynasty), Danguk University Library, and Yeong-ho Kim. See Bo-reum Kim, "Yeoyudang jip eseo Yeoyudang jeonseo ro," *Jindan hakbo* 124 (2015): 207–234.

²⁴ See Dong-u Jang, "Yeoyudang jeonseo pilsabon e gwanhan gochal," *Dasan hak* 15 (2009): 119–138, and In Bang, "Danguk dae bon Juyeok sajeon yeongu," *Dasan hak* 17 (2010): 7–44.

was not surprising that the edition ended up having multiple editorial errors. In addition, as discussed earlier, it might not have correctly reflected the base manuscript in structure and content. As a matter of fact, at least a portion of *Yeoyudang jeonse* has already been proven to be interpolations consisting of another scholar's writings.²⁵

Efforts to rectify the errors and supplement the Sinjo edition thus began, in the hope of minimizing possible misunderstandings of Dasan's ideas that could be blamed on inaccuracies in the printed source. In 1960, *Minbo ui*, one of Dasan's indispensable works of sociopolitical analysis, was added to a new edition of *Yeoyudang jeonse*; in 1962, *Sa-am seonsaeng yeonbo* was added to it in the same manner; in 1970, one volume of *Yeoyudang jeonse boyu* 與猶堂全書補遺 (*Supplementary Collection of Yeoyudang jeonse*), which was later supplemented with more of Dasan's writings, was published, consisting of writings that were previously unavailable to the general public; and in 2002 the Committee for Propagation of the Nation's Culture (later reorganized as the National Institution for Translation of the Korean Classics) printed a rectified version of *Yeoyudang jeonse*. The most noteworthy was the project for the publication of the *Established Edition of Yeoyudang jeonse*, which was propelled by the Foundation of Dasan's Scholarly and Cultural Heritages. That project, concluded in 2012, resulted in the publication of thirty-seven solid volumes. This edition reflects up-to-date textual scholarship on Dasan's works. On top of these new editions, Yi Ji-hyeong finished his translation of *Noneo gogeu ju* into Korean in 2010, suggesting numerous corrections of the editorial errors in the Sinjo edition. Since Yi Ji-hyeong was in charge of *Noneo gogeu ju* for the *Established* edition, many of the same corrections may be found there. The scholars involved in these efforts frequently referred to the Kyujanggak edition of *Noneo gogeu ju*. Contemporary research on *Noneo gogeu ju* thus depends on several editions: the Sinjo edition, the Kyujanggak edition, the Committee edition, Yi Ji-hyeong's edition, and the *Established* edition. One of the aims of this book is to contribute to the improvement of the text of *Noneo gogeu ju* by suggesting more necessary rectifications of the errors. I use brackets to indicate that the original wording enclosed within them should be corrected, but only when other editions do not note this, in order to avoid repetition and save space.

All relevant documents agree that Dasan finished writing *Noneo gogeu ju* in 1813, the thirteenth year of his exile. It appears that his unique interpretation of the *Analects* was informed by a deep knowledge of the Five Classics of Confucianism, and of history and culture—especially rituals—given that, according to his memoir, he started writing about the classics in 1802 and that all of his major works on them had been accomplished prior to the completion

²⁵ Eon-jong Kim, "Yeoyudang jeonse boyu ui jeojakbyeol jinwi munje e daehayeol (1), (2), and (3)," *Dasan hak* 9 (2006): 123–175; *Dasan hak* 10 (2007): 305–331; and *Dasan hak* 11 (2007): 321–353.

of *Noneo gogeuju*. Not only Dasan's knowledge but also his students, whom he accepted when he gained fame for his academic distinction in the rural area of Gangjin, assisted him in this project. One of his sons, on visiting his residence, witnessed how he managed to be productive during the period of his exile: he was dictating his interpretations to his students, who diligently jotted them down; some were searching the classical texts for passages that supported his arguments; others were making fair copies of what had been jotted down; still others were binding manuscripts into books.²⁶ His students Yi Gang-hoe (1789–?) and Yun Dong (1793–1853) especially contributed to the completion of *Noneo gogeuju*, which contains numerous records of their comments. To recognize the students' contributions, scholars today use the term “the scholarly group of Dasan” for those who assisted him in his pursuits.²⁷ This is not intended to suggest, of course, that his works should primarily be identified with them.

Regardless of the recorded year of the completion of *Noneo gogeuju*, Dasan's efforts to revise it seem to have continued. In his revisions, according to instructions found in his marginal notes, he tried to tone down his criticism of contemporary scholars, including Mao Qiling 毛奇齡 (1623–1713), and sometimes completely removed his original comments, for unknown reasons. Yi Ji-hyeong has argued that the students' comments that were recorded in *Noneo gogeuju* might have been added to the main body later and that theories and comments unavailable to Dasan also appear in *Noneo gogeuju*.²⁸ There is no evidence to suggest, however, that the basic structure and philosophy of the work was altered after its initial completion.

First published as forty rolls in traditional book binding, *Noneo gogeuju* was later printed in ten volumes by Sinjoseon sa and in two volumes in the *Established* edition. The most unusual aspect of the structure of *Noneo gogeuju* is a list of 175 “original meanings” of the *Analects*, titled “An Overview of the Original Meanings” [原義總括], which is placed at the very front of the work. The topics of the selected arguments vary: some concern culture and philosophy; others concern philology, history, and textual studies. Dasan must have believed that they would help readers correctly understand the teachings of Confucius. However, this list does not cover all of the creative readings and interpretations he offers in *Noneo gogeuju*. *Sa-am seonsaeng yeonbo* says: “Since there are so many different ideas in *Noneo gogeuju*, the ‘Original Meanings’ is specially placed in the book.”²⁹ The number of arguments *Noneo gogeuju* contains easily exceeds five hundred.

²⁶ See Gyu-yeong Jeong, Jae-so Song trans., *Dasan-ui han pyeongsaeng: Sa-am seonsaeng yeonbo*, 266–267.

²⁷ See Hyeong-taek Im, “Jeong Yak-yong ui Gangjin yubaegi ui gyoyuk hwaldong gwa geu seonggwa,” in *Silsa gusi ui Hanguk hak*, ed. Hyeong-taek Im (Seoul: Changbi, 2000), 399–434 and Jae-so Song, “Dasan hakdan yeongu seoseol,” *Dasan hak* 12 (2008): 7–24.

²⁸ Ji-hyeong Yi, *Noneo gogeuju* (Seoul: Sa-am, 2010), 10–11. To supplement this argument, see my comment on 5.18.

²⁹ Gyu-yeong Jeong, Jae-so Song trans., *Dasan-ui han pyeongsaeng: Sa-am seonsaeng yeonbo*, 207.

In fact, Dasan never stated that he himself selected and made a list of the 175 “original meanings.” *Sa-am seonsaeng yeonbo*, the only work that attests to the motivation for compiling “Overview of the Original Meanings,” was written by Jeong Gyu-yeong approximately ninety years after Dasan’s death. Although most of them certainly deal with crucial points in the *Analects*, some concern minor arguments; more important discussions of philosophical significance are missing from the list. Thus, in my view, it is debatable whether the creation of “Overview of the Original Meanings” should be attributed to Dasan or not. Certain arguments are currently missing in “Overview” that the author himself would surely have included had he prepared it himself. Unfortunately, no research materials are currently available to further this discussion. At the same time, it is also true that “Overview” impressed readers with what they took to be the creativity and contentiousness embedded in Dasan’s *Analects*.

The title *Noneo gogeuim ju*, *Old and New Commentaries on the Analects*, suits the content well because Dasan addresses all of the commentaries he had access to, both old and new. The major corpus of the “old commentaries” includes *Lun yu jijie* 論語集解, which was compiled by He Yan 何晏 (195–249); *Lun yu jijie yishu* 論語集解義疏 (hereafter *Lun yu yishu*) compiled by Huang Kan 皇侃 (488–545); and *Lun yu zhengyi* 論語正義 compiled by Xing Bing 邢昺 (932–1010).³⁰ Besides these major commentaries, Dasan seems to have regarded all of the commentaries produced before Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) as “old commentaries.” In harmony with the general understanding of the history of Confucian classical studies, Dasan acknowledged that Zhu Xi had opened a new era of research on the *Analects* by writing *Lun yu jizhu* 論語集註, a crucial new commentary in Dasan’s view. Thus he regarded all commentaries after Zhu Xi as “new commentaries”—including *Lun yu jizhu daquan* 論語集註大全, which introduces the commentaries of scholars in Zhu Xi’s school. In this respect, it is notable that Dasan also cited works of the Evidential Studies in Qing China and the Ancient Learning in Tokugawa Japan, especially the school of Learning of the Ancient Writings and Words. Although these works openly criticized neo-Confucian interpretations of the *Analects*, Dasan considered them “new commentaries,” alongside Zhu Xi’s commentary.

The title, however, conveys more than mere information on the scope of Dasan’s references. In my understanding, it tells us about his research methodology and the goal of his commentary. In other words, what he truly wished to achieve through his commentary on the *Analects* was a synthesis of all transmitted Confucian ideas (methodology) and thereby the creation of a new Confucian philosophy (goal). He was an ambitious syncretist who claimed that he understood the original meaning of the *Analects*. Since according to Dasan no one had addressed the original meaning before him, his claim is equivalent to a declaration of a new Confucian philosophy. It seems that he hoped that

³⁰ In *Siku quanshu*, *Lun yu jijie* and *Lun yu zhengyi* are compiled into *Lun yu zhushu*.

after his elucidation of the original meaning, three different kinds of commentaries on the *Analects* would exist: the old commentaries, the new commentaries, and his commentary, which synthesized both.

The main body of *Noneo gogeum ju* largely consists of two parts: grounds for Dasan's readings and arguments against various influential theories that he believed were invalid or interfered with "correct" understanding. Although "grounds" are not demarcated from "arguments" in the original text, in this book all grounds introduced in a chapter are placed under the heading "Grounds" and all arguments under "Arguments," even when only one argument is presented, in order to clarify the nature of the discussions in these two different categories.

To find his grounds, Dasan referred to a wide range of commentaries on the *Analects* and the classical texts. In this regard, he appears to have had no predilection for any post-Confucius school. For the most part, he disassociates Han-Tang Confucianism from Song-Ming Confucianism and, in turn, dissociates both of them from the intellectual movements that occurred during his time, Evidential Studies and Ancient Learning. He adopts comments sometimes from the old commentary, sometimes from the new, and sometimes from the works of his contemporaries, and he sometimes rejects them all. The grounds are usually supplemented by his own comment(s) following a phrase, *bo-wal* 補曰 ("I supplement as follows" in my translation), when he feels that the grounds are insufficient to reveal the true meaning of the passages: when he concludes that all transmitted comments fail to correctly explain a given passage, he supply his supplementary comment(s) only. Notwithstanding the fact that he respected Zhu Xi's scholarship the most, he only supports the comments by Zhu Xi that he believes are in harmony with his own understanding.

Since Dasan did not translate the original Chinese text of the *Analects* (which is sometimes difficult to read without comments) into Korean or more comprehensible forms, an examination of his arguments and refutations is necessary to understand how his interpretation differs from others'. He usually begins his argument by saying *bak-wal* 駁曰 ("I would refute this as follows" in my translation) except when he refutes comments by Zhu Xi or Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), in which cases he uses the more polite expression *jil-ui* 質疑 ("I question Master Zhu as follows" in my translation) to show, of course, his contemporary readers that he still maintains respect for the great leaders of neo-Confucianism. In my translation, his questions to Zhu Xi are not distinguished from those to Cheng Yi, and all questions phrased with *jil-ui* have been translated as though they address Zhu Xi's comments because Zhu Xi, in *Lun yu jizhu*, introduces and approves of those ideas of Cheng Yi that Dasan quarrels with.

Dasan's arguments are, more often than not, buttressed by textual evidence that he has "selected" from the classical texts and appear immediately after the expression *yinjeung* 引證 ("for a classical text that supports my argument here," or other similar expressions, in my translation). Since he relies on other classical texts to validate his interpretations, it is often necessary to