

Red and the Record: Archive Ecology and the Historiography of Color in Korea

Haram Park
jacksonpark2008@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine ways in which Korean historiography has informed the meaning of the color red across material, political, and cultural registers. The paper traces the history of red from its regulated use in Joseon royal clothing to its mass adoption during the 2002 FIFA World Cup, and argues that scholarly claims about red's symbolic significance frequently relied on extrapolation and assumptions.

This review draws on Korean institutional sources, secondary scholarship, and digitized primary archives to map two dominant interpretive lenses: red as a commodity structured by state control and scarcity, and red as a semantic signifier rooted in folk belief and shamanic tradition. By doing so, this paper finds that, while the material history of red is relatively well-documented, symbolic claims about red's cultural meaning rely heavily on elite records, which leaves non-elite perspectives underrepresented. Further, the paper further considers how Korea's archive ecology, shaped by wartime destruction, Japanese colonial seizure, and selective digitization, has constrained what can be claimed and by whom.

To draw a comparison between hemispheres, Spain and their historical ties to red appears as a historical counterpoint, revealing the absence of commodity-centered analysis in Korean scholarship. The review concludes by proposing three directions for future research: greater engagement with non-elite sources such as household compendia like *Gyuhapchongseo*, a more rigorous interrogation of the evidence standards underlying symbolic claims, and closer attention to how selective digitization has shaped which topics scholars are able to study at all.

INTRODUCTION

The dominant narrative about color in Korean history has centered around the color white, *Baeguiminjok* (백의민족, 白衣民族). It is evident that other colors held equal significance in post-colonial Korean history. Notably indigo dyed overcoat *durumagi* and red robes of the king exist and ceremonial five colors. Current media and understanding of historical memory presents red as the color of the king.

Sep 2026
Vol 11. No 5.

Analyzing the history of the color red is not merely an interpretation of aesthetics but rather a study of color as a proxy for power, hierarchy and cultural regulation.

This leads to an analytical framework of how color is used or interpreted as more than a daily object but as a symbol and apparatus of power structure. This review paper examines the narratives surrounding the color red in Korea through the lens of Korean and Western scholarship. The sources reviewed range from secondary publication about color and recordings about color to archival sources.

Korean research papers, publications from national institutes, online articles, and compendium of traditional dying techniques demonstrate throughlines in understanding and interpreting the color red. First, political historians and government writings tend to focus on the state level uses of red such as in royal clothing and political meanings. Simultaneously, folk historians and museums consider red based on folk traditions and systems such as Obangsaek (오방색, 五方色) and shamanistic practices. This tradition is often viewed in the lens of cultural and social history. Interpretations were highly based on the state level centered archives, such as *silok* or alternatively relied on the written records from the lower class that reflected people's production and the use of the color red. These interpretations are constructed based on available archives, many of which are digitized.

Western sources reviewed color from economic, political, and semantic perspectives. They focus on the origin, production, monopoly and the cultural symbolism of the color. They often posit the color red to inherently possess symbolic meanings. Despite the records of interpretations about red as desired and praised color, what symbolic meaning they have and how the meaning is created is often assumed. However there were limitations in accessing Western and Spanish sources due to the barrier of language and limitations of folk knowledge as a foreign scholar. This review aims to bridge the gap between English and Korean scholarship by examining how each tradition constructs claims about red, what evidence the claims rests on, and what areas are unexamined.

The review led to the following research questions: how has Korean scholarship described red materially and symbolically using available sources?; how do Korea's archive ecology (preservation, destruction, seizure, digitization) shape what can be claimed?; where do Western narratives and Spain as a comparator reveal blind spots in Korea-centered accounts? This is a Korea-centered narrative review; Spain appears only as a comparative case study on archives and on red-as-power and commodity. The aim of the paper is not to produce a parallel history between two nations but rather sharpen the understanding and direction of Korean scholarship through this contrast and comparison.

REVIEW METHODOLOGY

This paper is a Korea-centered narrative literature review with explicit organization rules. The goal is not to exhaust every publication on "red," but to map out the academic discourse surrounding red's material

history and symbolic claims. In doing so, it also examines how archive ecology shapes what can be claimed.

The review followed a keyword driven relevance method. Searches were made in Google Scholar and JSTOR for peer-reviewed scholarship, and Google Search was used to identify institutional or governmental publications online and archive portals. Since the review focuses on Korean history and general databases lack when providing enough relevant material, searches were made through the Korean scholarly database DBpia as well. Also National Institute of Korean History (NIKH) and Academy of Korean Studies (AKS) online databases were used to access digitized primary sources such as the veritable records of Joseon dynasty and topical history through keywords. For the purpose of allowing replication of the reviews, each database was used with a unique purpose and searches were conducted in Korean and English.

The review treats three classes of material as “literature,” but handles each differently: Secondary scholarship, peer-reviewed articles and academic books were used to identify the patterns of interpretation, dominant lenses such as state, power, economy, commodity, semantics, and the evidence for symbolic claims. Western sources were included as a comparator to examine what Korean scholarship leaves unanswered, foregrounds, and implicit.

Primary sources were utilised to establish the historic contexts and to explicate what evidence is available for claims about red. These are treated as evidence with positional bias, not as apparent truth. Digitized archives and portals are treated as objects of analysis. The review notes what these platforms make searchable and what they structurally obscure.

Inclusion / exclusion criteria

Included sources met at least one of the following criteria:

- peer-reviewed articles directly formulating a historical argument about the color red
- academic books
- institutional archive portals or national institutes’ publications that are relevant to red and archives

Excluded sources were removed for one or more reasons:

- popular articles used as evidence rather than discovery tools
- materials with lacking traceable author, provenance, or no evidence basis
- sources that mention “red” only in passing without historical argument or usable evidence
- materials about red and Spain that would turn the review into a parallel national history since Spain is only used for contrast on narrative formation on archive, power, commodity

Coding Framework

All included sources were coded into one or more of five fixed categories

- Power/state regulation
- Economy/commodity/production
- Semantics/symbolic meaning (and evidence standards)
- Folk belief/shamanism/오방색
- Archive ecology (preservation/destruction/seizure/digitization)

For each source the review extracted information belonging to one or more of the above categories, examining their core claims and evidence type. In reviewing their semantic claims, if a source asserted “red meant X” the review identified the warrant and substantiation. In case of the lack of evidence, the paper highlighted the absence of evidence.

Limitations

This method has structural limitations. First, available evidence is disproportionate as they are mostly elite and state-centered records. This can cause over representation of certain claims while thinning the alternative perspectives. Second, non-elites appear tangentially, and written sources by non-elites appear much later in Korean history. Third, keyword based search creates bias where digitized topics prevail. Selection bias is present toward what is searchable and appears primarily than what was necessarily most significant.

COLOR RED IN SPAIN AND EUROPE

In *A Perfect Red: Empire, Espionage, and the Quest for the Color of Desire*, Amy Butler Greenfield writes a political and economic narrative exploring the color red as a commodity. Her particular focus lies in the 16th century when Spain ignited a second phase of red craze in Europe by importing cochineal dye, a dyestuff manufactured of red insect cacti, from Mexico; each year 113-136 tons of dyestuff was shipped. She claims that the reason behind cochineal’s lucrativeness was its unmatched vibrancy and 30 times efficiency compared to pre-existing red dyes.¹

The government website of Alhambra shows that the identities of the city rely upon red. It writes that the Alhambra palace has always been linked to the color red. The name of the city itself translates to “the red one” in Arabic referencing the reddish walls and concrete built out of iron oxide clays that glowed under the Sun.² The name of the city Granada derived from the pomegranate, using red pomegranate in their coat of arms.³ The reference to the Sun opens a potential interpretation that red was the symbol of the Sun

¹ Amy Butler Greenfield, *A Perfect Red: Empire, Espionage, and the Quest for the Color of Desire* (HarperCollins, 2005), 3, 75, 90.

² La Alhambra de Granada, "History of the Alhambra," accessed November 1, 2025, <https://www.alhambra.org/en/alhambra-history.html>.

³ Elizabeth Drayson, *Lost Paradise: The Story of Granada* (Bloomsbury USA, 2022), 21.

and so conveyed a religious meaning of divine blessing. Tamara Pérez-Fernández supports the divine symbols in her paper by writing that the Catholics who came to power after the Moors found that the red symbolised their conquest as being approved by God. The city itself had become the Catholic martyr, as it had been soaked in blood in the name of conquest. The red was emblematic of how they “liberated” the city.⁴

The regional government of Castile and Leon demonstrates the importance of red beyond the physical identity of Spanish cities by writing that the kingdom of Castile adopted red in their flags and coat of arms since the 12th century. The official stance of the government towards the equipment of red reasons back to the symbolic meanings red had: “strength, victory, daring, highness and shrewdness.”⁵

Harvard Museum of Science and Culture writes that “Cochineal red became an international symbol of power in Europe” as it was “ten times more potent” than the red dye next in the line. As an example of red’s symbol as an authority, the source writes that the red color of the British navy red coats and red clergies of Catholic cardinals originated from cochineal. Reading from this, an interpretation could be made that red’s starkness was the key to fill the missing throne of the color of royalty, power, and authority after the Tyrian purple. Yet, HMSC also acknowledges the agency of “indigenous people,” featuring how production knowledge and skill belonged to them, even though the Spanish Empire traded the dye.⁶

These writings show the lenses of economy, power, and symbolic semantics that concern the state power. However, given the unique nature of commodities such as cochineal, the involvement of the producers, the natives, is also spotlighted.

SAFFLOWER IN KOREA AND ITS MEANING

In 홍염장, Yang-noh Yun writes a compendium about natural red dyeing method and the history of Korean red dye. He frames the history of Korean red dye primarily as a commodity history of transmission and use. By that traditional Korean red dyes hongyeom (홍염, 紅染) were produced from natural sources such as safflower, Asian madder, and sappanwood and that the red dyeing technique has originated from Egypt 4,500 years ago and reached Korea via China, the source positions red as a tradable material and technique rather than abstract symbol. Yun writes that the status of red is derived from its patterns of usage. The focus lies on who wore red, who was permitted to wear red, and under what conditions it used were regulated. In Goryeo (918–1392), crimson fabric was highly prized (worth about

⁴ Tamara Pérez-Fernández, “The Fall of Granada in Hall’s and Holinshed’s Chronicles: Genesis, Propaganda, and Reception,” in *Exile, Diplomacy and Texts: Exchanges between Iberia and the British Isles, 1500–1767*, ed. Ana Sáez-Hidalgo and Berta Cano-Echevarría (Brill, 2021), 132, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004438040_008.

⁵ Regional Government of Castilla y León, “Flag, Emblem and Coat of Arms,” accessed July 29, 2025, <https://conocecastillayleon.jcyl.es/web/en/historical-cultural-community/Flag-emblem-coat-arms.html>.

⁶ Harvard Museums of Science & Culture, “Cochineal: The Color of Power,” accessed October 30, 2025, <https://hmsc.harvard.edu/online-exhibits/cochineal1/color-power/>.

1/60 of a gold coin). Crimson became a royal color near the end of the Goryeo dynasty, when King Gongmin, breaking with the Yuan dynasty, allied with the Ming. As a subordinate gesture, Goryeo's monarch adopted deep red. In the Joseon dynasty (1392–1910), crimson became fully associated with the royal household. The source claims that red was regarded as a luxury referencing *Sillok* as its primary source. Red was banned for commoners to wear, due to its expense and its functional significance as a mode of dress worn when Chinese diplomats came to visit Korea. The accounts the source uses such as the red color of the Joseon king's robe aligns with other Korean sources on viewing red to connote prestige and elite class status.⁷ Simultaneously, Yun makes an important claim on the discontinuity and restoration of the red dyeing tradition of Korea: incorporating the change in color to gold of royal robe, developments of synthetic and mass produced dyes, and loss of artisans, the source acknowledges the dissipation of dyeing tradition. This perspective reflects the author's position in the discourse of Korean cultural heritage and his work of documentation as a work of cultural repair.⁸

When writing about the significance of color and their use, the NIKH approaches the topic from multiple angles. For example, Korean Cultural History analyzes the use of color from social history perspective, highlighting its use as an operative resource that could be used as valuable materials often given as diplomatic gifts between envoys. The chromatic prestige could be inferred not from the exchange and color's usage between people. Another publication *Topics in Korean History* extends this analysis from state-level distribution into the lenses of everyday economy. The source uses descriptions of markets recorded by Joseon elite authors and the livelihood of people. It focuses on the struggles and devaluation of the commoners. The source shows the values of textiles having been soared and contested as a luxury.⁹ The historiographical angle in the source is a micro lens. It shows that color matters because it becomes visible in the frictions of daily survival, imitation, and price inflation, not only in royal symbolism. The overall consistency is that NIKH constructs the meaning of color through the societal functions and bases their perspective on all hierarchical levels including the commoners and elite. Yet, the NIKH is an institution that belongs to the Korean Ministry of Education. Despite strict adherence to archival sources, they emphasize the importance of social history of color, and these sources demonstrate nationalistic bias in which sources often discuss the value and importance of Korean tradition.¹⁰

⁷ National Institute of Korean History, "Oneun Gyeongsullyeonbuteo jasaegul geumhage hada" 오는 경술년부터 자색을 금하게 하다, *Sejong sillok* 세종실록, Sejong 9/2/19 (1427), https://sillok.history.go.kr/id/kda_10902019_007.

⁸ Yun Yang-no 윤양노, *Hongyeomjang: Areumdaumeul honghwakkotui hanson e hongyeomjang: 아름다움을 홍화꽃의 한손에* (Seoul Metropolitan Government, 2019), 8, 9, 16, 30.

⁹ No Dae-hwan 노대환, "Pyeongmin ui salm: Baekseongdeuri saraganeun bangbeop" 평민의 삶: 백성들이 살아가는 방법, in *Juero bon Hanguksa 주제로 본 한국사* (National Institute of Korean History), accessed February 1, 2026, https://contents.history.go.kr/front/ht/view.do?levelId=ht_005_0030_0020.

¹⁰ NIKH, "Jasaegul geumhage hada."

KOREAN ARCHIVE AVAILABILITY

In Korean history, two categories of records were prioritized: official documents and private books. Official records included the *Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty* (chronological annals of the Joseon Dynasty), military records, and governance notes.¹¹ Private books comprised medical treatises, Confucian works, and literary texts.¹² Preservation methods differed: the primary archive Chunchugwan (춘추관, 春秋館) in the palace stored sealed *Silok* volumes after a king's death, while three secondary archives in *Seongju* (성주, 星州), *Jeonju* (전주, 全州), and *Chungju* (충주, 忠州) held copies to safeguard against wartime loss. This shows that Early Koreans were preoccupied with making sure that their nation had a solid basis before they worried about other markets.¹³

The *Yangban* aristocracy(양반, 兩班), which grew to 23% of the population in later Joseon period, maintained extensive personal libraries. Though largely removed from manual labor, they pursued scholarly study, often centered on Confucian classics.¹⁴ Access to books extended beyond the elite through *Seowon* (서원, 書院) neoconfucian academies, which housed thousands of works, prepared students for the imperial examination, and preserved fragile texts by transcription: a practice reminiscent of medieval European monastic scriptoria. Today, surviving *Seowon* still holds over 20,000 volumes from the Joseon period.¹⁵ This reverence for knowledge reflected a belief that preserving written memory was essential to cultural continuity. Yet archives faced repeated destruction: a fire consumed the *Seongju* archive in 1538, and the Japanese invasions of 1592–1598 left only one of the four main archives intact. Subsequent wars and uprisings deepened historical gaps, particularly for the Goryeo dynasty, while the loss of originals complicated the authenticity of later reconstructions.¹⁶

Scholars eventually relocated archives to five remote mountain sites to prevent further losses and to devote themselves to restoration. However, during Japanese colonial rule, Korean archives were seized and transferred to universities in Tokyo and Keijō, further eroding historical resources.¹⁷ The records seemed lost for a time, but with the continual revival of the state's power the records have slowly been

¹¹ Academy of Korean Studies, "472 Years of History Recorded with Precision: The Annals of the Joseon Dynasty," Korea100, last modified January 10, 2018, https://dh.aks.ac.kr/Korea100/wiki/index.php?title=472_Years_of_History_Recorded_with_Precision_-_The_Annals_of_the_Joseon_Dynasty&oldid=4233.

¹² National Library of Korea, "Review of Epidemics and the Medical Books of the Joseon Dynasty," accessed December 10, 2025, <https://www.nl.go.kr/EN/contents/EN34201000000.do>.

¹³ Kim Seong-hui 김성희, "Sago" 사고 (史庫), Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, Academy of Korean Studies, 2022, last modified December 3, 2023, <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0025370>.

¹⁴ National Institute of Korean History, "Yangban ingu ui jeungga" 양반인구의 증가, in *Sinpyeon Hanguksa* 신편 한국사, vol. 34, accessed July 30, 2025, https://contents.history.go.kr/mobile/nh/view.do?levelId=nh_034_0020_0010_0010.

¹⁵ Jeong Man-jo 정만조 et al., "Seowon" 서원 (書院), Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, Academy of Korean Studies, 1995, last modified October 29, 2024, <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0028091>.

¹⁶ Lee Han-hee 이한희, "Joseon sidae girokmurui saengsan mit cheorigwajeonggwajwa bojon" 조선시대 기록물의 생산 및 처리과정과 보존, *Seojihak yeongu* 서지학연구, no. 37 (2007), <https://doi.org/10.17258/jib.2007..37.287>.

¹⁷ Kim Seong-hui, "Sago."

returned to Korea. In fact, in recent decades, the National Institute of Korean History has spearheaded large scale digitization projects, making the *Silok*, *Seungjungwon Ilgi*, and other major works searchable online and accessible to scholars worldwide.¹⁸

KOREAN MATERIAL HISTORY OF RED

In Korean material history, the color red was structured based on hierarchy and institutions rather than free market. Red textiles and dyestuffs were documented to have been luxury goods with high demand, but access to it was strained by the scarcity of the material and state control.¹⁹ In the early to middle period of Joseon dynasty, handcraft production including dyeing was managed under the state-led artisan industry, which meant that artisans specialized to each product were obligated to supply the demands of the state institutions primarily. Dyeing offices such as Doyeomseo (도염서, 都染署) and in later Joseon, Jeyonggam (제용감, 濟用監) which controlled production and distribution of dyes existed as the artisanry system.²⁰ Under this system, it was first the state to have use of red textiles, then aristocrats followed by the commoners. While the demand for red was persistent among the non-elites, the access to red textiles were limited to only occasional circumstances and lower quality substitutes. Technical methodology was not strictly monopolized by the state, as it is evident from household compendiums such as *Gyuhapchonseo* that records methods for preparing red dyes.²¹ This indicates an existent and circulation of knowledge beyond institutions. However, the presence of knowledge did not equate to equal access to the material in all markets.

SEMANTICS OF RED IN KOREA

The National Museum of Korea presents red through the symbolic lens. It emphasises red's role as an important factor inside Korean culture. Rather than focusing on the political regulation and role of red in economy, NMK frames red to have acquired the meanings through semantics, symbolism, and shamanic rituals. It frames red as a color of yang energy that is associated with fire, sun, and the power to ward off evil spirits. The source evidences its claims from a primary source *동국세시기* that presents a detailed records of Korean customs and rituals. The perspective is based on the culture and descriptions that tends

¹⁸ National Institute of Korean History, "Introduction," accessed August 10, 2025, <https://www.history.go.kr/en/contents/contentsPage.do?groupId=000000000605&menuId=000000000608&pageId=000000000241>.

¹⁹ NIKH, "Jasaegul geumhage hada."

²⁰ Soon-Young Kim, "Dye Supply and Demand System and Type of Dyer in the Joseon Dynasty," *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles* 38, no. 5 (2014).

²¹ Yi Bingheogak 빙허각 이씨, *Gyuhap chongseo 규합총서* (1809), 88, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies, GG43214_00, https://kyudb.snu.ac.kr/book/view.do?book_cd=GG43214_00¬es=basic.

to prioritise the continuity of the Korean culture as presented by the National Museum, operated by the Ministry of Culture Sports and Tourism, which could reveal a tendency of selectivity.²²

In modern times, red's symbolism shifted dramatically. Red's meaning became heterogeneous and an amalgam of different perceptions. In the 20th century, it became linked to communism. Subsequently it is transformed into a stigma and a label for communists that operated in South Korea, giving it politically charged connotations that still endure in South Korea as a default. In a deeper layer of politicization, red in contemporary South Korea was appropriated to the conservative party due to their adoption as their emblematic color. A hue once tied to honor and sovereignty is now subject to divergent, often partisan, interpretations.²³

From the late 19th century onward, the position and standing of red among the people and its symbolic meanings experienced a further reshape by material change. The creation of synthetic dyes from madder based pigments and the availability of mass duplication of natural red dyes reduced the production costs and eliminated the monopoly of artisans that restricted people's access to high quality red. As industrial dyes entered the Korean markets red started to lose its scarcity enabling broader adoption of vibrant red. This led to loss of exclusivity of Korea's elite colours like 대홍. This is the point of shift in the parallel history when the linkage between red and hierarchy have weakened.

One of the examples of the culmination of synthetic red dyes in Korea is the 2002 FIFA World Cup when red was adopted through the phenomenon of the Red Devils. As a means of supporting the Korean national team, millions of South Koreans wore red clothing during the world cup season.²⁴ Red appeared in public celebrations, streets, anywhere that it united the nation by permanently embedding a collective national identity and pride in red's perception. This shift hindered the pre existing historical meanings such as privilege, elite, ritual power, and power but more to a national unity. However this did not solely happen because of re-interpretation of the colour but the change in accessibility and availability of the material.

RED AS A CULTURAL MEMORY IN S. KOREA

Despite the fact that Korean archives were destroyed, the cultural memory survived. Red was integrated into modern day Korean life via associations with culture, and the archives became a part of structures of governance. Analyzing their respective histories show that there are a lot of similar themes in the way that they were persevered through time. As stated before, archival preservation and the evolution of the color

²² Eunbae Moon, "Red, the Color of Power," National Museum of Korea Magazine, July 2016, <https://webzine.museum.go.kr/eng/sub.html?amIdx=15727>.

²³ Ye Rin Lee, "Screendance Activism, Online Platforms and Korean Political Performance" (PhD diss., University of Roehampton, 2023), 34, 35, 36, https://pure.roehampton.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/24024404/Ye_Rin_Lee_-_PhD_Yerin.pdf.

²⁴ Lee, "Screendance Activism," 35.

red in Korea became a part of the cycles to protect and redefine what it means to be Korean: red was a visual memory and archives were a written one. More nuanced analysis shows that their histories are linked via the authorial position they held.

Red was occasionally accessible to the peasantry of Korea, such as during special events like marriage. Even if it was not forbidden, red was barely available due to its difficult attaining method. This indicates that red was not necessarily exclusive to yangban aristocrats because the color itself denoted class difference. Rather, the socioeconomic structure that differentially allocated high demand commodities created unequal access to a desired color. This parallels how archives were kept and protected in temples and mountains and was accessible to only certain verified archivists and the royalty. The physical location of the archives played a large role in its inaccessibility. Regular citizens were prohibited from the protected archives due to its remoteness and government concerns of national security.²⁵

Moreover, inaccessibility was undergirded by the way archives were written. King, royalty, and governance were the main subjects of archives because of their prominence in the nation.²⁶ Peasants only appeared as tangential records that were often only discussed in the name of state building: serving the role of numbers and nothing more. The consequence of this is the creation of an unending cycle of ignorance and devaluation of the people's welfare.²⁷ Despite limited access to the color red, it was a color that held social importance among the peasantry. As mentioned above, peasants could only wear red on special occasions. In fact, red make-up was a luxury afforded only to marrying women.²⁸ Furthermore, there were norms around the color surrounding shamanism. Korean shamanism had prolonged associations with red with red amulets and food traditions. This consequently formed a public stigma that red was the color that warded off demons and ghosts and only worn in mystic practices.²⁹

However things changed during the Japanese occupation period. Archives were destroyed and looted. Access was clouded with colonialism.³⁰ There is an unspecified significant amount of knowledge that was lost during the turmoil in the years following. Military dictatorships and political uncertainty caused the focus to move away from archival protection. The absence of archives and further gaps of knowledge is where the analysis of modern historians fill in to create the second layer of analysis that is important to keep the historical contingencies and curiosities preserved in a flexible manner. It was not until 1999 when the government enacted the Public Records Management Act that the public was granted the right to know about operations and archival records.³¹

²⁵ NIKH, "Jasaageul geumhage hada."

²⁶ Lee Han-hee, "Joseon sidae girokmul."

²⁷ No Dae-hwan, "Pyeongmin ui salm."

²⁸ Heo Gyun 허균, "Saek" 색 (色), Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, Academy of Korean Studies, 1995, last modified October 17, 2024, <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0027476>.

²⁹ Moon, "Red, the Color of Power."

³⁰ Kim Seong-hui, "Sago."

³¹ Youseung Kim, "A Study of Public Records Management Act: Legal Status of the National Archives of Korea and Right to Know," *Journal of Korean Society of Archives and Records Management* 8, no. 1 (2008).

The advent and introduction of synthetic dye transformed the market access to the color red. As noted earlier, coming into the mid 19th century, red's prestige slowly wore down along with growing use of synthetic red dyes. Because of this people no longer had to rely on the expensive mastery and monopolised hues of red but could choose cheap reds. The color's (especially 대홍) exclusivity became a remnant of the past. When the 20th century arrived, the color became popular and widely adopted. This caused a social aversion to the color. But more practically and realistically, red was not physically accessible in the markets. Peasants opted into wearing beige or ivory because the undyed colors of fabric were more commonplace.³² However, with the invention of technology, starting from synthetic dyes to mass production, lower quality red became readily available for everyone.

The global recognition of red as a powerful symbol found itself in a variety of areas, starting from communism all the way to sports. In fact in 2002, the red wave came. Not in the sense of political ideology but in the way of nationalistic pride of the soccer team. The term Red Devils, a term endearing given to the nation's world cup finalists, became a part of what it meant to be Korean at the time; red jerseys were everywhere.³³ Although, historically red's status of royalty prohibited ordinary people's adoption, the soccer team ruptured the dichotomy of its access.

Modernisation efforts and the abolition of class hierarchy shifted the access to color red and knowledge. In the 19th century, again, along with modernisation, Korea's social hierarchy gradually weakened. Especially when the Korean civil examination system Gwageo (과거, 科擧) and hierarchical system collapsed during Gabogaehyeok 1894 (갑오개혁, 甲午改革), Yangban class' privilege of literacy and records became more public. The knowledge in general accumulated among the citizenry. It was inevitable for more people to get access to the governance records when more were involved in it.³⁴ It was only when the country found its peace, archives came back to the center of discussion. The people realised that in order to preserve their state and its identity archives were necessary. After all, for all its flaws and benefits, records were important. But more so, the national consensus became that the people needed to form the archives and act as check back mechanisms.³⁵ This is how the 1999 act, referenced above, was developed.³⁶

Despite the changes of preservation and production of archives and red, the cultural meaning shifts only inside certain boundaries. The cultural meaning does not necessarily depend only on the current usage and

³² National Institute of Korean History, Hanguk munhwasa 한국문화사, vol. 12, accessed August 23, 2025, https://contents.history.go.kr/mobile/km/view.do?levelId=km_012_0050_0050_0020.

³³ Lee, "Screenance Activism," 34.

³⁴ Song Ho-jung et al., *A History of Korea*, trans. Daniel Kane, Jong-Chol An, and Keith Seidel, 10th ed. (Academy of Korean Studies, 2019), 198, https://contents.history.go.kr/resources/common/pdf/A%20History%20of%20Korea_The%20Understanding%20Korea%20Series.pdf.

³⁵ Cha Gyeong-hui 차경희, "Honghwa" 홍화 (紅花), Joseon wangjo sillok sajeon 조선왕조실록사전, Academy of Korean Studies, accessed June 30, 2025, http://waks.aks.ac.kr/rsh/dir/rview.aspx?rshID=AKS-2013-CKD-1240001&dataID=AKS-2013-CKD-1240001_DIC@00015904.

³⁶ Youseung Kim, "Public Records Management Act."

status of it, but lies on the historical and traditional memory that people have experienced that can provide a certain perception to the people. Then the question becomes how does the history of the archive inform our understanding how red became significant to Korea. Simply put, without archives, the changings in meaning could not have been preserved. They preserved how red was seen and felt across different generations. Archives helped to track how memories and sentiments changed. But also through its destruction, it created metaphors of meaning for red's cultural role.

Claims that states red was a rare, prestigious, or symbolic color in Korean history can not be sustained without explicating what those meanings were and through which historical process and factors produced it. One way of achieving this would be examining the red not primarily as an abstract symbol but as a commodity. This approach makes it possible to examine the supply and demand; distribution and access; and policy and regulation of the dyestuff. These are not speculative but in fact visible in archival sources. *The Veritable Records of Joseon Dynasty*, for example, writes about the price and market situation surrounding domestically available dyestuff i.e. red-root gromwell and safflower and imported rosewood. Clearly, the supply and demand was a state concern over the control of the color red, but they are either implied or absent in Korean scholarship.

RED IN SPAIN AS A COMPARATOR

Red was a defining element of society in Spain. As mentioned above, Spain controlled the production of red for the whole of European history.³⁷ Because of the natural access to cinnabar in the Almaden mine, large scale productions became easier. But their quest to find more red did not stop them within the continent and thus colonialism happened. Red, however, was not like other import or export goods. The country became culturally and physically defined by it. Through the large demands of the market, red became a part of the global economy that Spain relied upon, thus archives recorded the historical continuances of it as financial or legal documents. This value transcended the memory of red until now.³⁸

However, inaccessibility was a common thread even found in Spain. Archives were hidden amongst the everyday environment. The archives were found in castles that were part of the city landscape, which people could see up to the front door of. The records themselves were hidden in multiple layers of locks and fortification of the castles. This system was reinforced by the elites and archivists.³⁹ These archives with physical locations had permanence; it was stagnant in its place as a powerful source of knowledge and state building. The Archive of the Aragon, Simancas, Seville, all large scale archives, were created due to the state's municipal responsibility of records and archives. Each state of Spain historically kept its own meticulous records of governance and finance and even religious groups had their own archives. In

³⁷ Greenfield, *A Perfect Red*, 3.

³⁸ Fundación de Cultura Islámica, "The Almadén Mines, an Andalusí Heritage," February 28, 2022, <https://funci.org/almaden-mines-a-world-heritage-site-marked-by-islamic-heritage/>.

³⁹ Antonio Castillo Gómez, "The New Culture of Archives in Early Modern Spain," *European History Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (2016): 546, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265691416649100>.

terms of the history of red in the country of Spain, inaccessibility is embedded within. This is because colonialism is the reason that the dye was able to make it into the country.⁴⁰ There are two layers of analysis. On the first layer, Spain monopolised the vibrant cochineal red that Europe was crazed over. This luxury was not available for the majority. Only elites from Europe had this privilege while the expensive nature of red never convinced the public citizens. Simultaneously, on the second layer of analysis, there was a finite number of cochineal dyes made even more precious due to its time-consuming and skill-required production. The indigenous people of South America, especially Mexico, were exploited and left with nothing but inaccessibility to their own goods.⁴¹

It is overtly clear that red has a large cultural significance in Spain. The identities of two cities rely upon this color. First, the Catholics who came to power in Granada after the Moors found that the red symbolised their conquest as being approved by God. The city itself had become the Catholic martyr, as it had been soaked in blood in the name of conquest. The red was emblematic of how they “liberated” the city. Thus, red became intertwined with romantic ideas of nostalgia and imperial beauty where people were able to recall the height of the Spanish empire.⁴² Granada still markets itself through the reddened pomegranate, which appears on bollards, street signs, manhole designs, and tourist souvenirs, so the colour continues to function as their identity. Furthermore, the importance of red was not only found in the physical identity of the city but was also found in flags and symbols of the kingdoms. Most prominently, the kingdom of Castile adopted red in their flags and coat of arms since the 12th century. The reasoning was that red symbolised victory, daring, and shrewdness, all of which are values that displayed the strength of the kingdom.⁴³ Additionally, Castile was a Catholic kingdom, a religion that prioritises red in their hierarchy. One of the highest authorities in their hierarchy was the cardinals who wore red. This was significant as it shows that the color was a symbol of divinity and thus logical that it is integrated to their state identity.⁴⁴ The archives support such analysis as proven by how the modern country has kept the olden flags persevered and revered. This creates a window for analysis of the historical significance of these symbols and the semiotics of red so as to how the state and nation defines and interprets colors.

Finally, red and its symbolic meaning of fervor and passion is found within the culture of Spain. Looking at the two largest traditions of flamenco dancing and bull fighting, red hues can not be divorced from their significance. One of the most striking parts of the dancing is its costume, specifically its dress. The dresses adopted vibrant colours to express vitality and to embellish women for their husbands. While the flamenco dresses have no certain colour, due to the vividness and undergoing bourgeois interpretation for the entertainment industry, the red colour stood as the prominent colour that was intertwined with the

⁴⁰ Francisco Javier Aguado González, "Private Archives in Spain: Legislation and Dissemination," *Atlanti* 17, nos. 1–2 (2007): 213.

⁴¹ Greenfield, *A Perfect Red*, 27.

⁴² Pérez-Fernández, "Fall of Granada," 132.

⁴³ Castilla y León, "Flag, Emblem and Coat of Arms."

⁴⁴ Harvard Museums, "Cochineal."

identity of Spanishness.⁴⁵ The red carnation (clavel), symbolising affection and passion for Christ, was used as an adornment on dancers' hair.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the popular bull fighting tradition in Spain adds to the cultural significance of red. Although there was no scientific evidence that red stimulates the bull, a particular reason to irritate the bull with the colour, the adoption of red was to make the matador stand out inside the ring as red could be seen by the audience standing in the circumspect.⁴⁷ Also, the cultural recognition of red in Spain heroises the dynamic action and makes the sport climatic, as the colour red naturally alerts people and has been calling to mind a sense of bravery and festive mood in the Spanish culture. The alertness, vividness, and link to love and religion, led the colour red naturally to be positioned as a vital identity in the cultural, political, and social context of Spain.⁴⁸

Quite evidently, the color red was far more publicly accessible than the physical archives of the country. A lot of it had to do with mass production and the normalisation of it in traditions and politics. Once again, the understanding of historical development of the importance of red is made possible through the access to Spanish archives. As mentioned above, in 2007, its transparency became a large shifting point that established a legal framework in accessing public information.⁴⁹ The implications are that records can now become integrated into how the citizens understand their country: just how red became a part of their nationalistic identity.

COMPARISON WITH KOREA

There is a degree of similarity of the way red and archive was considered in Korea and Spain. Starting off with inaccessibility, the common citizens did not view these two items as necessities in their life. It was a tangential and elite symbolism that was tucked away. In fact, red dye was exclusive in both nations and moreover the archives were prioritised and protected through multiple layers of system and guards.⁵⁰ These commonalities were found because of the state's legitimacy and stable power leading to their societal and cultural goal to preserve a historic memory of their timeline. Furthermore, red's importance was mirrored as a special color constantly associated with religion, aristocrats, and unattainability: Korea with Shamanism and social restrictions and Spain with Catholicism. Culturally, red settled as a representation of national zeal. Korea football team's Red Devil forever left red as a uniting force of the nation, and in Spain, their traditional flamenco dresses and cultural sports provided them with red pride.⁵¹ Red also found its trajectory coming into the modern day, as being politicised as it was attributed to

⁴⁵ Gran Gala Flamenco, "Trajes de flamenca: Origen y tipos más destacados," May 24, 2024, <https://www.grangalaflamenco.com/en/blog/traje-de-flamenca-historia-y-origenes/>.

⁴⁶ An Qi, "Meet the Spanish Dancer in Flaming Red Dress," CGTN, September 27, 2019, <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2019-09-27/Meet-the-Spanish-dancer-in-flaming-red-dress-Kk601hWko0/index.html>.

⁴⁷ La Flamenca de Borgoña, "The Best Bullfighting Cape," November 27, 2022, <https://laflamencadeborgona.es/en/blogs/noticias/capote-torero>.

⁴⁸ Cristina Soriano and Javier Valenzuela, "Emotion and Colour across Languages: Implicit Associations in Spanish Colour Terms," *Social Science Information* 48, no. 3 (2009), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018409106199>.

⁴⁹ Aguado González, "Private Archives in Spain," 209.

⁵⁰ Aguado González, "Private Archives in Spain," 213.

⁵¹ An Qi, "Meet the Spanish Dancer."

communist ideologies and later to conservative parties. Red clearly found its significance in the nation's historical archives.⁵²

However, there are differences in the way that each of the similarities manifested throughout history. For the case of Spain, the emergence of red largely happened inside the country. The rudimentary red dyes of Spain such as cinnabar and marbles were all regional natural resources. Thus, despite the Moorish ruling periods and Christian influence, the color red's significance had always been in the country in cities like Granada. The Moors used the city's resources to build the walls and the Christians came and only implied meanings over the city.⁵³ However, in the case of Korea, red was not part of their regional resources. Safflowers, madders, and sappan wood dyes came from the neighbouring countries, especially through China's large trading route before some safflowers became a standard dyestuff. Also in historical perspectives, the Koryeo and Joseon dynasties of Korea have unsurprising but countless connections with Chinese culture. Mainly, the two cultures exchanged through regular envoy visits. Political dynamics between Chinese states and its tributaries explains the emergence of red as the royal color. The reason behind the red clothing of Korean kings in Joseon dynasty also goes back to their relationship with China. As a tributary state of China, only the Chinese emperor was permitted the golden-yellow robe while Korean kings were bound to red.⁵⁴

It is fascinating to see the two countries in very separate regions and diplomacy in history and still in modern day have such shared developments of red and archives. These were at its core common thread amongst the vast majority of the nations and were ubiquitous elements. The world propagated flags containing red all across the world, from Trukiye, USA, UK to Morocco. The Aztecs symbolised their nation with red, likewise with the Maori tribes on the other side of the globe. The world acquires these facts from the meticulous archives that exist in civilizations and tribes.⁵⁵ Thus again proving that the archives provide the basis of the cultural interpretation the world makes. From pre-colonial history to the modern era, red has not been divorced from statehood. Furthermore, even the cultural norms of red are associated with diverse meanings. As showcased in Spain, red represents love, passion, and vitality to many countries and international celebrations. Red also becomes signifiers of gore and horror in cinematic and fictional fields and sometimes also the red cape that superheroes wear. As we write a new part of the story of red, the archives continue along with our advancement, culture, and technology. The color finds no singular static meaning in any nation and field. Mayhaps, this is because of how red links back to the inherent nature of the Earth and humans. It is found in the universal Sun that shines every single individual in the world leading to its meaning of vitality. Red's symbolism is unending: fire, blood, flowers, and more will always and continuously work in tandem or against each other to create the multifaceted nature of how the world continues to understand this hue.⁵⁶

⁵² Heo Gyun, "Saek."

⁵³ La Alhambra de Granada, "History of the Alhambra."

⁵⁴ Yun Yang-no, *Hongyeomjang*, 8, 16.

⁵⁵ Elena Phipps, "Cochineal Red: The Art History of a Color," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 67, no. 3 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.2307/25701595>.

⁵⁶ Michel Pastoureau, *Red: The History of a Color*, trans. Jody Gladding (Princeton University Press, 2017).

CONCLUSION

This review examined how Korean historiography has constructed the meaning and history of the color red by analysing the types of sources utilised, lenses scholars used to interpret, and the biases and conditions of archives that constrain or support claims. The review avoided treating red as a self-evident semantic symbol but approached it as material, political, cultural, and economical object produced through production, scarcity, methodology, regulation, and archives. Korean sources and scholarship was compared with Western baseline in order not to draw parallel national history but to make clear what different lenses were equipped, what were emphasised, and what were not reviewed in Korea sources.

The three research questions posed onset can be answered:

Korean scholarship has described red primarily through two lenses: material and symbol. The material history is thoroughly explored by sources such as Yun, Kim, and NIKH. The symbolic interpretations, represented by NMK's framing as evil-warding, yang energy and by symbols of Obangsaek, is present across multiple institutional sources, but thin in terms of evidence. Symbolic claims are largely dependent on extrapolation from folk knowledge and elite sources without verification of how widely and consistently distributed these meanings were across social class or time.⁵⁷ Korean scholarship has not yet produced an account that integrates both registers to explain how material conditions produced, neglected, sustained the symbolic meanings.

The archive ecology of Korea has shaped the claims significantly. The cycle of destruction and preservation has led to disproportionate survival of elite records and led to over representation of top-down perspective, commoners only appear tangentially. The gaps caused by wars, Japan's colonialism, and selective digitisation have made the chromatic culture and perspective of the non-elite difficult to reconstruct systematically.⁵⁸ Digitization, particularly underacknowledged, undermines scholars' attention to oral traditions and non-textual sources that lack searchable items.

The comparison with Spain's scholarship and history reveals the lens of commodity applied consistently in color history is largely missing in Korean scholarship. While anglophone scholarship delves into production, supply, and market access, Korean scholarships gravitate towards discussing the symbolic meaning and cultural significance of red color, leaving the ground for material conditions that produced that meaning undiscussed. The Spain comparator does not directly supply an answer for Korean historiography, rather it opens an undiscovered question for Korean scholarship that has not yet been asked with sufficient rigour: What does the material history of red dye reveal that its symbolic history has assumed?

Research Agenda

⁵⁷ Moon, "Red, the Color of Power."

⁵⁸ Academy of Korean Studies, "472 Years of History."

The review of Korean historiography of red reveals structural imbalance in the existing scholarship. To address this gap, future research should prioritise the following questions.

What non-elite traces—such as market records, household manuals, material culture inventories—could proxy daily red usage beyond elite annals?

An example of this non-elite primary source is Gyuhapchongseo (규합총서, 閨閣叢書), a household compendium authored by a woman and focused toward domestic practices rather than elite or state concerns. Unlike state official records which often provide an elite male centered perspective, it documents dyeing methods, textile, food preparation, and ritual practices within the common household in the 19th century. The book is digitized and readily accessible; it is already at a foundation of systematic analysis. Focused examination of sources such as Gyuhapchongseo would enable historians to access non-elite perspectives and methods of practices, allowing for developed reconstruction of how red functioned in everyday Korean life.⁵⁹

Which “symbolic” claims about red are evidence-supported vs assumption-driven in the scholarship? What are the ways to establish an evidence-supported claim using historical records?

The symbolic importance of red as the color of power and authority is comparatively well substantiated by archival records that evidence strict state control over the production and distribution of color among many other goods. In contrast, the cultural claims about red remain assumed without evidence. Scholarship frequently states that the five cosmological colors, Obangsaek, are important in Korean culture. However, the extent to which they were important in everyday life are quantitatively unsubstantiated. Claims on semantic consensus regarding red and the popular beliefs are often based on extrapolation from elite sources or folkloric beliefs.⁶⁰ There are two constraints identified that complicates the verification. First, the repeated wars and destruction of physical archives caused significant disruption to the records. Second, the reconstruction of folk culture is limited by the scarcity of sources. While the annals and official historical archival records of events, conversations are in great detail powered by the state’s systematic ability to preserve and recover, it is difficult to find equivalent sources from non-elites that recorded the ideas and perspectives. Therefore, many assertions about the cultural meaning reflect interpretation rather than empirical evidence.

How did digitization change what scholars study?

The review heavily relied on digital searches. It reviewed already digitally published archives, electronically available journals, government published online articles, and keyword based search within online repositories. Digitization has produced clear advantages. It lowered access barriers that previously restricted research and benefitted those with institutional privilege and proximity to physical archives.

⁵⁹ Yi Bingheogak, Gyuhap chongseo, 88.

⁶⁰ Moon, "Red, the Color of Power."

Topics that are keyword heavy such as color and symbolism are benefited as they can navigate large textual corporas more efficiently. This has enabled increased work of scholarship on searchable themes. However, simultaneously, digitization introduces a new kind of bias where sources with meticulous index and dense texts are favoured. Whilst topics that lack stable keywords, or survive only through oral and non-textual media are marginalized. Also, scholars working in fields with limited digitization despite significance face disadvantages. Subsequently, modern publication trends reflect the patterns of digital accessibility and availability rather than the content itself.

REFERENCES

- Academy of Korean Studies. "472 Years of History Recorded with Precision: The Annals of the Joseon Dynasty." Korea100, 2018.
https://dh.aks.ac.kr/Korea100/wiki/index.php/472_Years_of_History_Recorded_with_Precision_-_The_Annals_of_the_Joseon_Dynasty
- Aguado González, Francisco Javier. "Private Archives in Spain: Legislation and Dissemination." *Atlanti* 17, nos. 1–2 (2007): 209–22.
- An Qi. "Meet the Spanish Dancer in Flaming Red Dress." CGTN, September 27, 2019.
<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2019-09-27/Meet-the-Spanish-dancer-in-flaming-red-dress-Kk601hWko0/index.html>.
- Castillo Gómez, Antonio. "The New Culture of Archives in Early Modern Spain." *European History Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (2016): 545–67. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265691416649100>.
- Cha Gyeong-hui. "Honghwa" 홍화 (紅花). Joseon wangjo sillok sajeon 조선왕조실록사전 [Encyclopedia of the veritable records of the Joseon dynasty]. Academy of Korean Studies. Accessed June 30, 2025.
http://waks.aks.ac.kr/rsh/dir/rview.aspx?rshID=AKS-2013-CKD-1240001&dataID=AKS-2013-CKD-1240001_DIC@00015904.
- Drayson, Elizabeth. *Lost Paradise: The Story of Granada*. Bloomsbury USA, 2022.
- Fundación de Cultura Islámica. "The Almadén Mines, an Andalusí Heritage." February 28, 2022.

- <https://funci.org/almaden-mines-a-world-heritage-site-marked-by-islamic-heritage/>.
- Gran Gala Flamenco. "Trajes de flamenca: Origen y tipos más destacados." May 24, 2024. <https://www.granlalaflamenco.com/en/blog/traje-de-flamenca-historia-y-origenes/>.
- Greenfield, Amy Butler. *A Perfect Red: Empire, Espionage, and the Quest for the Color of Desire*. HarperCollins, 2005.
- Harvard Museums of Science and Culture. "Cochineal: The Color of Power." Accessed October 30, 2025. <https://hmsc.harvard.edu/online-exhibits/cochineal1/color-power/>.
- Heo Gyun. "Saek" 색 (色). Encyclopedia of Korean Culture. Academy of Korean Studies, 1995. Last modified October 17, 2024. <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0027476>.
- Jeong Man-jo, Jang Gyeong-ho, and Jeong Sun-woo. "Seowon" 서원 (書院). Encyclopedia of Korean Culture. Academy of Korean Studies, 1995. Last modified October 29, 2024. <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0028091>.
- Kim Seong-hui. "Sago" 사고 (史庫). Encyclopedia of Korean Culture. Academy of Korean Studies, 2022. Last modified December 3, 2023. <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0025370>.
- Kim, Soon-Young. "Dye Supply and Demand System and Type of Dyer in the Joseon Dynasty." *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles* 38, no. 5 (2014): 755–68.
- Kim, Youseung. "A Study of Public Records Management Act: Legal Status of the National Archives of Korea and Right to Know." *Journal of Korean Society of Archives and Records Management* 8, no. 1 (2008): 5–25.
- La Alhambra de Granada. "History of the Alhambra." Accessed November 1, 2025. <https://www.alhambra.org/en/alhambra-history.html>.
- La Flamenca de Borgoña. "The Best Bullfighting Cape." October 30, 2022. <https://laflamencadeborgona.es/en/blogs/noticias/capote-torero>.
- Lee Han-hee 이한희. "Joseon sidae girokmurui saengsan mit cheorigwajeonggwa bojon" 조선시대 기록물의 생산 및 처리과정과 보존 [The creation, management process, and preservation of records in the Joseon dynasty]. *서지학연구*, no. 37 (2007): 287–323. <https://doi.org/10.17258/jib.2007..37.287>.
- Lee, Ye Rin. "Screendance Activism, Online Platforms and Korean Political Performance." PhD diss., University of Roehampton, 2023.
- Moon, Eunbae. "Red, the Color of Power." *National Museum of Korea Magazine*, July 2016. <https://webzine.museum.go.kr/eng/sub.html?amIdx=15727>.
- National Institute of Korean History. *Hanguk munhwasa 한국문화사* [Cultural history of Korea]. Vol. 12. Accessed August 23, 2025. https://contents.history.go.kr/mobile/km/list.do?levelId=km_012_0050
- National Institute of Korean History. "Introduction." Accessed August 10, 2025. <https://www.history.go.kr/en/contents/contentsPage.do?groupId=000000000605&menuId=00000000608&pageId=000000000241>.
- National Institute of Korean History. "Oneun Gyeongsullyeonbuteo jasaegul geumhage hada" 오는 경술년부터 자색을 금하게 하다 [A ban on purple beginning in the coming Gyeongsul year]. *Sejong sillok 세종실록*, 1427. https://sillok.history.go.kr/id/kda_10902019_007.
- National Institute of Korean History. "Yangban ingu ui jeungga" 양반인구의 증가 [The increase in the

- yangban population]. In Sinpyeon Hanguksa 신편 한국사. Vol. 34. Accessed July 30, 2025. https://contents.history.go.kr/mobile/nh/view.do?levelId=nh_034_0020_0010_0010.
- National Library of Korea. "Review of Epidemics and the Medical Books of the Joseon Dynasty." Accessed December 10, 2025. <https://www.nl.go.kr/EN/contents/EN34201000000.do>.
- No Dae-hwan. "Pyeongmin ui salm: Baekseongdeul i saraganeun bangbeop" 평민의 삶: 백성들이 살아가는 방법 [The lives of commoners]. In Juero bon Hanguksa 주제로 본 한국사. National Institute of Korean History. Accessed February 1, 2026. https://contents.history.go.kr/front/ht/view.do?levelId=ht_005_0030_0020.
- Pastoureau, Michel. *Red: The History of a Color*. Translated by Jody Gladding. Princeton University Press, 2017.
- Pérez-Fernández, Tamara. "The Fall of Granada in Hall's and Holinshed's Chronicles: Genesis, Propaganda, and Reception." In *Exile, Diplomacy and Texts: Exchanges between Iberia and the British Isles, 1500–1767*, edited by Ana Sáez-Hidalgo and Berta Cano-Echevarría. Brill, 2021. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004438040_008.
- Phipps, Elena. "Cochineal Red: The Art History of a Color." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 67, no. 3 (2010): 4–48. <https://doi.org/10.2307/25701595>.
- Regional Government of Castilla y León. "Flag, Emblem and Coat of Arms." Accessed July 29, 2025. <https://conocecastillayleon.jcyl.es/web/en/historical-cultural-community/Flag-emblem-coat-arms.html>.
- Song Ho-jung, Jeon Deog-jae, Lim Ki-hwan, et al. *A History of Korea*. Translated by Daniel Kane, Jong-Chol An, and Keith Seidel. 10th ed. Academy of Korean Studies, 2019. https://contents.history.go.kr/resources/common/pdf/A%20History%20of%20Korea_The%20Understanding%20Korea%20Series.pdf.
- Soriano, Cristina, and Javier Valenzuela. "Emotion and Colour across Languages: Implicit Associations in Spanish Colour Terms." *Social Science Information* 48, no. 3 (2009): 421–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018409106199>.
- Yi Bingheogak. *Gyuhap chongseo* 규합총서 [Encyclopedia of women's daily life]. 1809. Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies, Seoul National University, GG43214_00. https://kyudb.snu.ac.kr/book/view.do?book_cd=GG43214_00¬es=basic.
- Yun Yang-no. *Hongyeomjang: Areumdaumeul honghwakkotui hanson e* [Hongyeomjang: Beauty in the hand of the safflower]. Seoul Metropolitan Government, 2019.