

# The Legend of Jeju's Origin

- Story of the beginning of the world
- **Creation Myth**

The world had been dark for a long time. Suddenly, dawn broke and the energy of dawn began to hang over the world covered with darkness and chaos. The sky opened at the first hour of the first day of the first month of the first year. The ground cracked open at the second hour of the second day of the second month of the second year. The boundary between heaven and earth became clearer. When the earth cracked, the ground shot up and water flowed down. At this time, blue dew from the sky and black dew from the ground were united and everything started to be formed. The stars were formed first: Altair in the east, Vega in the west, Canopus in the south, the Big Dipper in the north and the Orion Belt in the center. The multitude of stars filled the space in the sky. It was still dark but blue clouds in the east, white clouds in the west, red clouds in the south, black clouds in the north and yellow clouds in the center began coming and going. At one point, the light of day started to break after all the chickens cried as the Cheonhwang chicken lifted its neck. The Jihwang chicken flapped its wings and the Inhwang chicken lifted its tail. Then the King of Heaven and Earth sent two suns and two moons to the earth, completely opening the sky.

- A song of yearning that echoes in the beautiful island of woes,
- **Grandmother Seolmundae and the Five Hundred Generals**

Once upon a time there lived a grandmother named Seolmundae who was unimaginably gigantic and strong. This mystical grandmother shoveled huge mounds of earth and in only seven tosses of her shovel, created Mount Halla. The dirt that fell through her tattered skirt formed each of the more than 360 unique secondary parasitic cones known as oreum. Grandmother Seolmundae gave birth to as many as 500 sons. One day, while all her sons were out hunting a tragedy occurred when Seolmundae, by accident, fell into a gigantic pot of soup she was making to feed her sons. After a while, the sons returned home and hurriedly ate the soup, not knowing their mother was part of it. When they learned the truth, they were so sad that they cried bitter tears and hardened into rocks through the grief they felt for their mother. Their blood and tears shed revive every spring and make Mount Halla bloom in bright color as the royal azaleas blossom.

- The breath of Tamna's Origin,
- **The Myth of Three Family Names**

Long ago, before Jeju Island was inhabited by men, three demi-gods rose from the land at the northern foot of Mount Halla. They were Ko Eulla, Yang Eulla and Bu Eulla and the place where they rose is presently known as Samseonghyeol. One day, the three demi-gods found a box that had landed on a beach and opened it. Inside they found a jade box in the shape of a bird's egg with an envoy to keep watch over it. Inside the jade box were a calf, a foal and the seeds of five types of grain. The envoy said, "I am the envoy of Byeoknang in the East Sea. Our King has three daughters but he could not find husbands for them, even though they are of marriageable age. When he saw you three legendary founders, he commanded me to bring his her daughters to you." After he finished his words, the envoy climbed to the sky on a white horse. The three demi-gods prepared themselves through a celebratory ritual in Heaven, showered in the pond known as Honinji and married the three princesses. Together they established their homes and families and from that time forward, farmed the five grains and raised cattle. Through the abundant crops, they founded the Tamna State.

The female-oriented Shamanistic rituals, known as gut, are the opposite of the male-oriented Confucianist poje, and usually performed at dang, which are the homes of Jeju's many gods and goddesses. The rituals continued until the present day because of their power to strengthen the unity of villagers and maintain community life. The common form of dang is a sanctified old tree, a rock cave or a huge rock. Dang for long have been taking care of the villages and the people of Jeju.

## Folk of Jeju

### **Dang**

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### **Shingugan (Moving Season)**

On Jeju Island, there is traditionally only one moving period during the year called Shingugan. Legend has it that the gods report to the King of Heaven about the state of the world once a year, and based on their yearly performance; are assigned to a new place. During this period, Jeju people move so that the evil gods cannot find them. This period continues for a week that generally begins five days after Daehan (late January) and lasts until three days before Ipchun (early February). The saying goes that if you move outside of this period, you will have misfortune.

### **Pojedan (Place for village festival)**

When males of the Jeju villages performed village festivals as per the Confucian rites, they called them poje and the places where the events are held are called pojedan. These sites are where Jeju-do people wish for peace for the village. The offerings given can vary depending on the number of gods considered to be present. In addition, approach it with and leave any Recently, village festivals, with the support of the villagers, cultural heritage

## History of Jeju

Every Korean student learns about the history of Jeju during their time at school because Jeju Island is a place where history is still alive. Let's take a look at Jeju's history from the Three Kingdom Period through the Goryeo and Choseon Dynasties and Japanese colonial period, and up to the tumultuous years of modern history.

### **The thousand year history of Tamna**

Tamna is Jeju's old name, meaning "island country." The process of settlement of Tamna on Jeju Island is illustrated by Tamna's settlement myth, which is known as Samseong shinhwa. To see archaeological evidence of the early settlement of Jeju, visit Samyang-dong Prehistoric Site, which has been designated Historic Site No.416. The site contains the earliest known and largest residential remains in Jeju, dating back to the third century B.C. during the proto-Three Kingdoms Period. This site shows society during the period of Tamna formation (200 B.C. ~ 200 A.D.) Tamna is known to have been an active trading partner with Baekje, Goguryeo and Silla during the Three Kingdoms Period. Tamna also had diplomatic relations with the Tang Dynasty in China and Japan after Baekje was destroyed by an allied force of Silla and Tang. Tamna was historically known

as the independent Kingdom of the Sea. It became subjected to the Goryeo Dynasty, and its name was changed to Jeju. meaning “a big province across the sea.”

### **The final battle site of anti-Mongolian resistance, Hangpaduri**

After being continuously defeated by the allied forces in Ganghwado and Jindo, Sambyeolcho came to Jeju, which was his last battlefield, and built a double-walled fortress inside an oreum. The site, which is the present Hangpaduri, spread across 6 kilometers with a height of 5 m and width of 3.4 km, and an inner stone-castle with a courtyard, government offices and various defense facilities. However, Hangpaduri fortress fell on April 4, 1273, after Sambyeolcho finally died, having fought till his final breath and last soldier. The blood of Sambyeolcho dyed the soil of the oreum red and since then it has been called Bulgeun (Red) Oreum. Traces of this fortress can still be found, as can relics including stone hinges and tiles that are displayed in the Hangpaduri Museum and serve as important materials for historical studies. An Anti-Mongolian Monument at the museum entrance extols the nationalistic spirit of Sambyeolcho.

### **History of Exile, Chusa Exile Site**

Jeju Island is where approximately 200 people were sent into exile throughout the 500 years of the Choseon Dynasty. The island was suitable to isolate criminals because it was cut off from the mainland and it was difficult to travel there at that time. This site is where Chusa Kim Jeong-Hee completed “Sehando” while in exile. The Chusa Exile Site has remained a part of Jeju Island where we can remember the artist’s life in exile.

### **The outbreak of the Independence,or Jeju Hangil (Anti-Japanese), Movement**

The representative independence movements in Jeju were the Jocheon Independence Movement, the Beopjeongsa Movement and the Women Divers Anti-Japanese Movement. Jeju was only a small island, but it took part strongly in the various Anti-Japanese Movements. Among them, the Women Divers Anti-Japanese Movement of 1930, which involved more than 10,000 women divers, was the largest ever national movement by women.

### **Learn about tragedy before you experience peace April 3rd Peace Park**

In 1948, Jeju suffered through the April 3rd Incident, which is regarded as one of the worst tragedies in modern Korean history. Tens of thousands of lives were sacrificed and

about 130 villages were destroyed. The April 3rd Incident was like a gale that swept across Jeju over a period of about seven years. Because of this, it is not unusual to find historical sites related to the April 3rd Incident everywhere on the island. Jeju has since become an island of tourism and world peace, but if you want to experience true peace, you should first know about the tragic time that Jeju endured. If you pass by without understanding that history, your tour will only be half complete. Jeju's April 3rd Peace Park was established to look back on the April 3rd Incident and is utilized as an educational place for peace and human rights. The main facilities include sites at which to remember the victims, such as Memorial Tower, Memorial Altar, Memorial Plaza, April 3rd Historical Center, April 3rd Cultural Center and Sculptures of Symbols.