

The Yeokwontonomun

길

"I forge my own path, always anew"







9월 1일, 여권통문의 날. 시대를 앞서간 여성들의 용기와 외침을 기억하고 그 정신을 이어 나갑니다.

We commemorate the courage and voices of the pioneering women who were ahead of their time, and we pledge to uphold their enduring legacy.

여학교설시통문

女學校說示通問

대저 물物이 극도에 다다르면 반드시 변화하고 법이 극도 에 다다르면 반드시 갖춤은 고금에 떳떳한 이치라, 아 동방 삼천리 강토와 열성조^{列聖朝} 오백여년 기업^{基業}으로 승평^{昇平} 일 월에 취포醉飽 무사無事하더니우리 성상聖上 폐하醛下의 외외規規 탕탕蕩夢하신 덕업德業으로 임어臨御하신 후에 국운이 더욱 성왕 盛旺하여 이미 대황제大皇帝 위에 어삐하옵시고 문명 개화할 정 치로 만기萬機를 총찰總察하시니 이제 우리 이천만 동포 형제가 성의聖意를 효순했順하여 전일前日 해태懈怠한 행습行習은 영영 버 리고 각각 개명^{開明}한 신식^{新式}을 준행^{遵行}할새 사사^{事事}이 취서^就 ^緒되어 일신^{日新} 우일신^{又日新}함을 사람마다 힘쓸 것이어늘 어찌 하여 일향 계 귀먹고 눈먼 병신 모양으로 구습 層層에만 빠져있 나뇨. 이것이 한심한 일이로다. 혹자或者 이목구비耳리육와 사 지오관四肢五官 육체가 남녀가 다름이 있는가. 어찌하여 병신 모양으로 사나이가 벌어 주는 것만 앉아 먹고 평생을 심규深 圈에 처하여 남의 절제節制만 받으리오. 이왕에 우리보다 먼저 문명개화한 나라들을 보면 남녀가 동등권이 있는지라. 어려 서부터 각각 학교에 다니며 각종 학문을 다 배워 이목을 넓 혀 창성 팀盛한 후에 사나이와 부부지의 夫婦之義를 맺어 평생을

살더라도 그 사나이에게 일호도 압제를 받지 아니하고 후대 투符함을 받음은 다름 아니라 그 학문과 지식이 사나이와 못지 아니한 고로 권리도 일반이니 어찌 아름답지 아니하리오. 슬프도다. 전일을 생각하면 사나이가 위력處力으로 여편네를 압제하려고 한갓 옛글을 빙자하여 말하되, 여자는 안에 있어 밖을 말하지 말며 술과 밥을 지음이 마땅하다 하는지라. 어찌하여 사지육체가 사나이와 일반이어들 이 같은 압제를 받아 세상형편을 알지 못하고 죽은 사람 모양이 되리오. 이제는 옛 풍규屬規를 전폐하고 개명 진보하여 우리나라도 타국과 같이 여학교를 설립하고 각각 여아 첫분들을 보내어 각항 음편 재주를 배워 일후 日後에 여중 군자들이 되게 하올 차초로 방장方將 여학교를 창설하오니 유지 有志하신 우리 동포 형제 여러 여중 영웅호걸님네들은 각각 분발지심奮發之나을 내어 귀한 여아들을 우리 여학교에 들여 보내시라 하시거든 곧 착명 참하시기를 바라나이다.

구월일일 여학교 통문 발기인 리소사 김소사



FEMALE EDUCATION SOCIETY

Female education, properly so called, was unknown to Korea until the advent of the Christian missionary. Schools for girls, under the efficient management of different missions, have been well attended and largely successful.

The Government, wasting large sums of money in all sorts of absurd enterprises, has paid a little attention to general education but none at all to female education. A number of Korean ladies lately formed a Female Education Society and sent out an appeal of which the following is a condensed and liberal translation:

"Our land enjoying peace and prosperity for five centuries, has become an empire under the virtuous reign of our present Sovereign, who controls the affairs of the realm for its civilization and enlightenment.

Our brothers, in obedience to the sacred will of His Majesty, leaving behind former indolence and laziness, endeavor each and all to promote the reformation of the country. On the other hand, we women, like the blind and deaf, still adhere to old customers.

Why is this? Is it because our hands or feet, our eyes or ears are different from those of man? Why is it that we, like idiots, are con-

tented to depend on the bounty of men, living in lifelong seclusion under the control of the stronger sex?"

Behold the woman of a civilized nation! She enjoys equal rights with man. She studies all branches of learning in schools. When she grows up into womanhood marriage does not mean bondage to her. Nay, she is honored because she is not inferior to her husband in education and accomplishment.

Our hearts are sad when we think of our wrongs! Men, by mere superiority of force, kept us in oppression. Their books tell us that a woman must always be secluded; that she must not speak of the outside affairs, and that she must only attend to the preparation of wine and food.

Why should we, not differing from men in the enjoyment of physical and mental faculties, endure wrongs in ignorance of the world like dead people? We propose to establish a female school where girls may learn all kinds of accomplishment to prepare them for the duties of intelligent womanhood. We hope that our sisters will send their girls to the school."

This is a remarkable movement and we wish every success.

남녀가 동등권이 있는지라!

1898년 9월 1일, 서울 북촌은 여성들의 뜨거운 외침으로 가득 찼습니다. 여성이기 이전에 한 인간으로서 동등하게 살 수 있는 권리를 주장했습니다.

> 교육을 받을 권리! 직업을 가질 권리! 정치에 참여할 권리!

이날의 외침은 훗날 「여권통문」으로 불렸습니다. 이는 여성이 자신의 권리를 스스로 인식하고 주장한 최초의 여성 인권 선언문이자, 최초의 정치적 행동입니다.

Equal Rights for Men and Women!

On September 1, 1898, the streets of Bukchon in Seoul were filled with the powerful voices of women. They were not merely advocating women's rights but for their rights to live equally as human beings.

The right to education!

The right to work!

The right to participate in politics!

These voices, which would later be known as the Yeokwontongmun (Women's Rights Announcement), marked the first time in Korean history that women formally recognized and asserted their rights, laying the foundation for the women's rights movement and their entry into political activism.

우리는 이것의 성공을 바란다

당시 언론은 「여권통문」을 "놀랍고 신기한 일"이라며 보 도했습니다.

『황성신문』과 『제국신문』, 그리고 『독립신문』은 여성들의 주장을 게재하며 그들의 요구 사항을 알렸습니다. 이를 통해 그 사건이 당시 여성들의 인식 변화를 상징하는 중요한 역사 적 사건임을 알 수 있습니다.

『황성신문』, 『제국신문』, 『독립신문』에 실린 「여권통문」





We Wish Every Success

At the time, the press described the Yeokwontongmun as "astonishing and remarkable."

Newspapers like The Hwangseong Sinmun, The Jeguk Sinmun, and The Independent brought these demands to public attention, amplifying the women's voices. Their coverage underscores the event as a pivotal moment, marking a profound shift in women's awareness and the broader societal landscape.

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PENALE EDUCATION SOCIETY.	carry forward \$104,000 odd to new profit and loss so-	deceared by \$1,278,507.37. Owners Assessed in Guld
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여아들을 보내어 각항 재주를 배워 일후에 여중군자들이 되게 하올 차

여성들은 스스로가 여권을 선언한 데 이어 여성단체인 찬양회(贊襄會)를 조직했습니다.

찬양회는 동등한 능력과 권리를 가진 주체, 오늘날 '시민' 으로서의 여성의 역량을 강화하기 위해 노력했습니다. 여성이 정치적 주체로서 참여할 수 있는 조건을 갖출 수 있도록 교육을 강조하고 학교 설립을 추진했습니다.

그 결실로 대한민국 최초로 설립된 여학교가 바로 '순성여학교'입니다.

Girls May Learn All Kinds of Accomplishment to Prepare Them for the Duties of Intelligent Womanhood

In the wake of their declaration of women's rights, the women established the Chanyanghoe, an organization dedicated to empowering women as equal citizens, with both rights and responsibilities.

The Chanyanghoe prioritized education and vigorously promoted the establishment of schools to prepare women as political participants.

Their efforts culminated in the founding of Sunsong Girls' School, Korea's first school for girls.

Higher mathematics class at Ehwa Haktang Girl's School, Seoul. (출처: University of Southern California Libraries)

초창기 YWCA 지도자들 (출처: 한국YWCA연합회

근대 여성운동의 초석이 되다

북촌에서 울려 퍼진 여성들의 당당한 외침은 대한민국 근 대 여성운동의 초석이 되었습니다.

「여권통문」발표 이후 대한민국 역사에서 여성들은 끊임 없이 사회 활동과 정치에 참여했습니다. 국채보상운동, 독립 운동, 노동운동, 민주화운동 과정에 주도적으로 참여했습니 다. 법과 제도의 개선을 위해 수많은 단체를 조직하고 목소 리를 높여 왔습니다.

여성운동의 역사는 끊임없이 조명되어야 합니다.

Laying the Foundation for the Modern Women's Movement

The defiant voices of women echoing through Bukchon laid the cornerstone of the modern women's movement in Korea.

After the proclamation of the Yeokwontongmun, Korean women have consistently engaged in social and political activism. They were at the forefront of the National Debt Redemption Movement, the independence movement, the labor movement, and the democratization movement. Women have formed numerous organizations and raised their voices to improve laws and institutions.

The history of the women's movement must be constantly illuminated and remembered.

재건 대한애국부인회원 (출처: 국사편찬위원회 전자사료관) 1960년 YWCA 주최로 열린 축첩제도·여권을 무시한 정치가에 반대하는 가두시위 (출천·대하VWCA 연합하)

정치 참여의 주체, 여성

대한민국 여성의 투표권이 투쟁 없이 1948년 제헌 정부수립과 함께 자동으로 주어진 것으로 아는 사람이 많습니다.

그러나 「여권통문」을 시작으로 촉발된 참정권 운동은 1898년 찬양회, 1927년 근우회, 1924년 창당한 '대한여자 국민당' 등을 통해 국민적 동의를 획득했습니다.

대한민국 여성은 해방 이후 1948년 5월 10일 남한 단독 선거에서 참정권을 쟁취했습니다. 그리고 1949년 보궐선거 에서 최초의 여성 정치인, 임영신 의원이 당선되었습니다.

지금 이 시간에도 여성의 정치적 참여 확대와 동수민주주 의를 향한 발걸음은 계속되고 있습니다.

Women as Political Participants

Many believe that, in Korea, women were simply granted the right to vote in 1948 with the establishment of the first constitutional government, without any struggle.

However, the suffrage movement, ignited by the Yeokwontongmun, garnered national support through organizations like the Chanyanghoe in 1898, the Geunwoohoe in 1927, and the Korean Women's National Party founded in 1924.

Korean women achieved their right to vote in the South Korean election on May 10, 1948, after liberation. In the 1949 by-election, Louise Yim became the first woman elected to the National Assembly.

Even today, the march toward greater political participation for women and gender equality in democracy continues.

1948년 5·10총선거일 투표소 앞에서 줄지어 서 있는 한국 여성들 (출처: National Archives and Records Administration

세계의 여성인권선언문

세계적으로도 여성의 인권과 권리를 주장하는 목소리는 컸습니다. 1791년 프랑스 올랭프 드 구즈의 '여성의 권리선 언', 1848년 미국 세네카 폴스에서 개최된 '여성권리대회', 그리고 영국과 뉴질랜드 등지의 여성 참정권 운동은 세계 여 성운동의 중요한 이정표였습니다.

한국의 「여권통문」은 이러한 세계적인 움직임 속에서 독자적으로 여성의 권리를 외친 중요한 선언문입니다.



"Our Roll of Honor," signatures to the "Declaration of Sentiments" (1848).

Milestones in the Global Women's Rights Movement

Globally, the voices demanding women's rights and human dignity have been powerful. The Declaration of the Rights of Woman by Olympe de Gouges in France in 1791, the Woman's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, USA, in 1848, and the women's suffrage movements in the United Kingdom and New Zealand are all significant milestones in the global women's movement.

Korea's Yeokwontongmun stands as a vital declaration within this global context, independently championing women's rights.

여권통문의 기억을 되새기며

여권통문은 한국의 근대 여성운동의 상징이자, 여성의 권리를 외친 중요한 역사적 사건입니다.

2019년 10월 31일, 대한민국 국회는 9월 1일을 「여권통 문의 날」로 지정했습니다. [양성평등기본법 제38조 ②항]

권리와 평등은 스스로 쟁취해야 하는 것입니다. 「여권통문의 날」을 통해 1898년 여성들의 외침과 실천을 기리고 미래세대에까지 전하는 것은 우리의 중요한 책임입니다.



Honoring the Legacy of the Yeokwontongmun

The Yeokwontongmun is a symbol of the modern women's movement in Korea and stands as a pivotal historical event in the fight for women's rights.

On October 31, 2019, the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea designated September 1st as Yeokwontongmun Day, which is the official Women's Rights Announcement Day [Gender Equality Act, Article 38, Clause 2].

Rights and equality are not given; they must be won through our own efforts. Commemorating Yeokwontongmun Day honors the voices and actions of the women of 1898 and ensures that their legacy is passed on to future generations. It is our solemn duty to keep this memory alive.

나의 길은 언제나 새로운 길

대중 앞에서 여성의 권리를 주장하고, 찬양회와 순성여학 교를 설립한 여성들의 용기와 도전은 오늘날 우리에게 큰 영 감을 줍니다.

그들은 당대의 한계를 넘어서기 위해 불굴의 의지로 싸웠으며, 그들의 노력 덕분에 오늘날 여성들이 더 나은 세상에서 살아갈 수 있게 되었습니다.

2024년, 우리는 여전히 많은 과제를 안고 있습니다. 불평 등 해소뿐만 아니라 나와 미래세대를 위해 더 과감하고 진취적인 목소리를 적극적으로 내야 합니다.

대한제국 여성들이 열어 놓은 '새로운 길'을 이어받아 또 다른 '새로운 길'을 함께 만들어 나갑시다.

I Forge My Own Path, Always Anew

The courage and determination of the women who publicly championed their rights, established the Chanyanghoe, and founded Sunsong Girls' School continue to inspire us today.

They fought indomitably to overcome the limitations of their time, and their efforts have made the world a better place for women today.

As we face the challenges of 2024 and beyond, we must not only address inequality but also boldly and proactively raise our voices for ourselves and future generations.

Let us continue the 'new path' forged by the women of the Korean Empire and together create yet another 'new path' for the future.



세상을 바꾸는 정치! 정치를 바꾸는 여성!

Politics That Change the World!

Women Who Change Politics!

