The western part of the province is dominated by the Sobaek Range and its branch ranges, while the southern extremities of the T'aebaek Ranges extend into the east of the province. The central part of the province is relatively low-lying and is largely occupied by the catchment areas of the Naktong River and its tributaries. The steep, rocky eastern coastline contrasts sharply with the highly indented submerged coastline to the south, and the province includes 467 islands of varying sizes which are scattered throughout the Tadohae ('Sea of Many Islands'), a popular tourist attraction.

South Kyongsang Province enjoys the mildest climate in the Korean Peninsula and the least seasonal variation in temperature due to its location in the southeast of the peninsula adjacent to the East and Yellow Seas. However, there are notable regional differences in winter conditions, and average temperatures generally decrease as one moves inland. Although the province shares the record for highest annual precipitation (1 200mm - 1 600mm) with Cheju, coastal districts generally experience much greater rainfall than inland districts in the northwest. In addition, the province is occasionally battered by typhoons moving northward past the Japanese island of Kyushu into the East Sea.

Agriculture and Industry

Both agricultural and industrial sectors in Kyongsang Province have experienced major transformations during the past three decades. Cultivation of traditional crops such as rice and grains has been supplemented by high-yield commercial activities, including livestock raising, fruit and vegetable growing and horticulture, while rapid growth in manufacturing has radically altered the nature of the local economy and workforce. The province adjoins rich fishing grounds, however industrial growth has accompanied a decline in the fishing population, despite increased yields due to improved technology. Shallow waters along the southern coastline provide an ideal environment for seaweed and shellfish farming, however such activities are threatened by pollution from neighboring industrial complexes and occasional oil spills. Industrial development from the 1960s at Ulsan and from the mid-1970s at Masan and surrounding districts has centered on petrochemicals, shipbuilding and machinery production, and the province also contains important textile and marine product processing industries.

Tourism

South Kyongsang Province is renowned for its beautiful mountains and scenic coastlines, and the existence of numerous historic sites (notably from the ancient Kaya Kingdom) further contribute to its popularity as a tourist destination. Mount Chiri (1 915m) is the highest peak in mainland South Korea, and the national park which it contains is a favorite hiking area. Haein Temple, located in Kaya National Park in the far north of the province, is home to the collection of Buddhist scriptures inscribed on woodblocks known as the Tripitaka Koreana, while the Hallyo Waterway in the south of the province contains numerous summer beach resorts. Other attractions include Togyusan National Park, the cherry orchard at Chinhae, historical sites at Miryang, the Puril and Hwanggye Falls located respectively at Hadong and Hapch'ön, and the shipbuilding yards at Ulsan.

General Information

Area: 11 559 square kilometers; population: 3 249 000 (1995 est.); provincial headquarters: Ch'angwön. Other major cities include Ulsan and Masan.

Kyongsang-do Chiriji (Geographical Description of the Kyongsang Province)

The Kyongsangdo chiriji (1425) is a single-volume work and the first work of its kind compiled in the Chosŏn dynasty.

It is known from the Veritable Record that King Sejong ordered the collection of data necessary to compile a comprehensive work on the topography of Korea and the histories of various local administrative organs. Accordingly, the Ch'unch'ugwan (Office for
Annals Compilation) began the collection of a wide variety of material.

After eight years' labour, the Shinch'an p'alto chiriji (Newly Compiled Geographical Descriptions of the Eight Provinces) was finally completed and presented to the throne. This is believed to be the basis of the national topography included in the Annals of King Sejong which was compiled twenty-two years later. However, the original topographies collected by the central government were all destroyed by fire, together with other Veritable Records of previous kings, during the Japanese Invasion of 1592. The still extant Kyŏngsangdo chiriji is regarded as one of the main sources of the Shinch'an p'alto chiriji. It is a copy of the original text submitted to the central government and was preserved in the Kyŏngju Provincial Office.

The book begins with the introduction to Kyŏngsang Province in accordance with the twelve provisions which the Yejo (Board of Rites) issued to each province. These twelve provisions were: 1.) Changes in the name of the province, 2.) The history of relations between the subordinate administrative units, 3.) The number of local administrative organizations within the province, 4.) Descriptions, names and measurements of mountains and rivers, together with the sites of fortifications, 5.) The articles of tribute produced in the province, 6.) The inland fortresses or military installations, 7.) The naval garrisons and number of ships, 8.) The royal tombs and Confucian institutes, 9.) The nature of the soil, natural features and the customs, 10.) The islands coming under the jurisdiction of the province, 11.) Taxes of the province and the land and water transportation routes, 12.) The number of houses.

The administrative structure of the province as revealed in the book was four basic jurisdictional districts which in turn were divided into various subordinate administrative units such as pu, mok, chu and hyŏn. The book is more of a human geography than a simple topography. It serves as an excellent source for the study of the economic, social and financial conditions of Kyŏngsang Province during Chosŏn.

By any gauge, the Kyŏngsangdo Chiriji is a large book, measuring 85.6 cm in length and 43.6 cm in width, with a thickness of 7.8 cm. It is made of heavy, durable Korean paper of high quality. It has ninety-nine leaves (198 pages) and there are twelve missing leaves (24 pages).

A sister work of the Kyŏngsangdo chiriji is another huge book, Kyŏngsangdo sokch'an chiriji, which also concerns provincial conditions. It was compiled in the first year of King Yejong (1469), that is, forty-four years after the compilation of Kyŏngsangdo chiriji. It is the fourth oldest work of its kind of the Chosŏn dynasty.

The Kyŏngsangdo chiriji and the Kyŏngsangdo sokch'an chiriji were revised by the Council of the Government-General of Korea and editions of both works were printed in 1938. In 1981 Asea Munhwasa published the photo-reproduction of Kyŏngsangdo chiriji as a part of volume one of Chŏng'guk chir'i ch'ŏngsŏ. (National Geography Series).

Kyŏngsun, King (r. 927-935)

King Kyŏngsun (?-979) was the fifty-sixth king of Shilla and reigned from 927-935. His family name was Kim and his given name Pu. Kyŏngsun is notable in that he was the last king of the Shilla Kingdom and that his pledge of loyalty to the subsequent Koryŏ Kingdom served to legitimatise the new Kingdom. Kyŏngsun assumed the throne of Shilla in 927 after his predecessor, King Kyŏng'ae (r. 924-927), was killed by Kyŏnhwŏn (?-936) the ruler of Later Paekche. Kyŏngsun took the Shilla throne with the backing of Kyŏnhwŏn and in actuality ruled in name only. However, in the end the policies of Kyŏngsun tended more towards the direction of Wang Kŏn (King T'aejo, r. 918-943) rather than the reckless Paekche king.
In 935 Kyongsun offered his formal surrender to Koryo and in this way guaranteed his own destiny. King T'aejo took a wife from the Shilla royal family and therefore assumed the mantle of the Shilla Kingdom. Kyongsun, on the other hand, was treated with extreme generosity by King T'aejo. He remained in Kyongju and was granted the title of Duke of Changsung (Changsung kong) and a shigup (tax village).

Kyongui, Queen (see Lady Hong)

Kyongumak

Kyongun Palace (see Tōksu Palace)

Kyŏnhwŏn (?-935)

Kyŏnhwŏn was the founder of the Later Paekche Kingdom and ruled it from 892 to 935. Originally his surname was Yi and he was born to a poor farming family in the Sangju area. He began as a foot soldier in the Shilla army and advanced through the ranks as reward for the valour he displayed in various battles along the southwestern coast of Shilla. At the time, the central government of Shilla was greatly weakened and as a result various insurgencies flared throughout the country. This situation became particularly magnified after the accession to the throne by Queen Chinsŏng (r. 887-897) when the feudal lords became quite open in their disdain for the throne. Moreover, the plight of the exploited commoners became markedly worse and bands of thieves and bandits became commonplace. It was in this situation that in 892 Kyŏnhwŏn led a band of followers to seize Kwangju and to proclaim the founding of the Later Paekche Kingdom with the declaration that he intended to avenge the last Paekche king, Úija (r. 641-660).

Kyŏnhwŏn proved to be a despotic ruler and set out on a trail of military conquests, seizing large tracts of land from the seemingly helpless Shilla Kingdom. In 927 he sacked Kyongju and killed King Kyong'ae (r. 924-927) while abducting many high Shilla officials and taking large quantities of treasures, arms and the highly skilled craftsmen of the Shilla capital. If it had not been for the opposition of the ruler of Koryo, Wang Kŏn (King T'aejo, r. 918-943), Kyŏnhwŏn would have easily taken all of Shilla. However, Wang Kŏn led his forces and battled Kyŏnhwŏn and eventually drove him from Kyongju.

The battles between Koryo and Later Paekche continued to rage as the two states struggled for the legacy of Shilla. With the local gentry in the former areas controlled by Shilla pledging their support to either Wang Kŏn or Kyŏnhwŏn in an effort to protect their own well being, the battles between the two states ground to a stalemate. However, in 929 the Koryo forces defeated Kyŏnhwŏn at Koch'ang which turned the tide of the conflict in favour of Koryo. Kyŏnhwŏn was now forced to retreat to the southwest coast where Koryo could concentrate the brunt of their attack. At this same time, Kyŏnhwŏn became a victim of the inner turmoil in his own family. He had named his fourth son Kŭmgang as his successor, but his eldest son Shin'gŏm rejected this and imprisoned his father in Kŭmsan Temple and took the throne for himself. Kyŏnhwŏn managed to flee from the temple and sought refuge in Koryo where he plotted with Wang Kŏn to crush his son. In 935 Koryo troops, with Kyŏnhwŏn in the lead, smashed the remains of the Later Paekche Kingdom.

Kyŏnhwŏn's rise to power and later fall were both reflections of the turbulent times that surrounded the collapse of the Shilla Kingdom. Numerous rebellions and problems plagued the people and thus made it easier for warlords such as Kyŏnhwŏn to appear and take power. However, it is noteworthy that at the end of his life, Kyŏnhwŏn joined forces with Wang Kŏn who succeeded in bringing a new era to Korea.
Kyung Hee University

Kyung Hee University (Kyŏnghŭi Taehakkyo) is located in Hoegi-dong in Seoul. Its foundation was in 1949 when Paeyŏng Taehakkwan (established in 1946) and Shinhăng Chŏnmun Hakkwan (established in 1947) were combined to form the two-year Shinhăng Ch’o’gŭp Taehak (Shinhăng Junior College). Development of the new college was delayed by the Korean War, but in February 1952 in Pusan, official permission was finally granted for its re-establishment. From this decision, in December 1952, the school became the four-year institution, Shinhăng College.

A Seoul campus was built at the school’s present site and in February 1954, a graduate school was established. In 1955, the college attained university status and then consisted of four colleges: Liberal Arts and Science; Law; Physical Education; and Politics and Economics. In February 1960, the college changed its title to Kyung Hee University. In response to the growth of the university in the 1960s and 1970s, the Suwon campus was established in Kyŏnggi Province in 1979.

Kyung Hee University has continued to expand, with additions to both its undergraduate and post-graduate programs. Today, the university consists of seventeen colleges and nine graduate schools. At the Seoul Campus are the Colleges of Dentistry; Education; Home Economics; Law; Liberal Arts and Sciences; Medicine; Oriental Medicine; Music; Pharmacology; Political Science and Economics; and Physical Education. Also on the Seoul campus are the Graduate School and the Graduate Schools of Business Administration; Education; International Legal Affairs; Journalism and Mass Communication; Pan-Pacific International Studies; Physical Education and Public Administration. At the Suwon Campus are located the Colleges of Engineering; Foreign Languages and Literature; Industry; Natural Science; Physical Education and Sports; and Social Sciences; as well as the Graduate School of Industry and Information. In addition, the university contains a number of important research institutions including the Han’guk Chŏnt’ong Munhwa Yŏn’guso (Korea Traditional Culture Research Institute) and the Han’guk Choryu Yŏn’guso (Korea Ornithology Research Institute).

Kyung Nam University

A private university, Kyung Nam (Kyŏngnam Taehakkayo) began its life in a modest way in December 1946. It is located in Masan, South Kyongsang Province, but had a number of different locations on its way to becoming a university.

In August 1947, it became Kungmin College in Seoul, and in 1952, under the patronage of Haen Temple, it underwent a further name-change to Haen College. The college was soon moved to Chinju, and later, in 1956, to Wanwŏl-dong in Masan. A further name-change, to Masan College, took place in 1961. For a while during the Korean War, the college found a safe haven in Pusan.

Expansion of the college commenced in 1968 and continued into the 1970s. Another title change, to Kyung Nam College occurred in December 1971, and in 1973 the college moved to its present location. After initiating its own doctorate program in 1979, Kyung Nam was granted university status in 1982.

Today, Kyung Nam University consists of six colleges: (Economics and Commerce; Education; Engineering; Law and Political Science; Liberal Arts; Natural Sciences); an Evening School; the Graduate School and the Graduate Schools of Business Administration; Education; Industry; and Public Administration.

Periodical publications of the university include, the Kyŏngnamdae hakpo (KNU Gazette)
in Korean and The Kyungnam Times in English.

**Kyunghyang shinmun**

The *Kyunghyang shinmun* (Kyŏnghyang shinmun) is a general daily newspaper published in Seoul. It was first published on 6 October 1946 by the Kyŏngsŏng Catholic Church Foundation, its name being taken from a Catholic newspaper of 1906. Strongly committed to an honest reporting strategy, centred on ethics, the *Kyunghyang shinmun* reached a circulation of 62,000 one year after publication, which is a testament to its integrity. During the Korean War, the *Kyunghyang shinmun* followed the troops in their push northward. It published special 'battlefront' editions, and from this came the first Korean war correspondent, Pak Sŏng-hwan. A special edition of the newspaper was even issued amidst the chaos of the South Korean army’s major retreat to Taegu. After the armistice, the newspaper returned to its Seoul offices and resumed activities there. In November 1954, it was published in tabloid form, the first in Korea. From July 1957, it became a two-page morning edition and a four-page evening edition, the total pages per diem being increased to eight by mid-December 1958.

From its inception, the *Kyunghyang shinmun* was staunchly conservative and anti-Communist, but in 1959 its orientation changed to reflect an anti-dictatorship, opposition party-like stance, and this was further strengthened after an incident in which the vice-president, Chang Myŏn, was attacked. With its newly-acquired political leanings, the newspaper was threatened by the Syngman Rhee (Yi Sŏngman) government, but at the same time established a new high in its circulation, which had then reached about 200,000. Its frequent attacks on the Rhee government resulted in Chu Yŏhan, a writer for the *Kyunghyang shinmun* and a member of the National Assembly, and Han Ch’ang-gu, the president of the newspaper, being formally charged by the police for actions detrimental to national security, on 28 February 1959. On 30 April, its offices were forcibly closed under Order No. 88 of the government’s military law, and production ceased. The closure sparked criticism from every level of Korean society, and the *Kyunghyang shinmun* began a lengthy legal struggle to regain its right to publish. Finally, on 27 April 1960 the wheels of its presses began to turn again. Its struggles with authoritarian governments did not cease, however, with the demise of the Rhee regime, and its constant criticism of Park Chung Hee’s government, also resulted in the imprisonment of some of its staff.

More recently, the *Kyunghyang shinmun* has undergone various changes, including its format, and its enlargement to twelve pages. It includes a wide range of news items, ranging from national and international news to sports and lifestyle coverage. The newspaper has permanent correspondents in Tokyo, Washington D.C., and Paris, as well as in other international locations. Its distribution is about fifty-two per cent metropolitan and forty-eight per cent regional.

**Kyungpook National University**

Kyungpook National University (Kyŏngbuk Taehakkyo) is located in San’gyŏk-dong in Taegu. The university was founded in May 1952 as an amalgamation of three Taegu colleges devoted to medicine, education and agriculture. Along with the creation of Kyungpook National University, an affiliated hospital; School of nursing; high school; junior high school and elementary school were created and in the following year, a graduate school was established.

Today the University consists of thirteen colleges: the Colleges of Agriculture; Dentistry; Economics and Commerce; Engineering; Human Ecology; Humanities; Law; Medicine; Music and Visual Arts; Natural Science; Social Sciences; and Veterinary Medicine; and the Teachers’ College. For graduates studies, there is the Graduate School as well as the Graduate Schools of Agriculture Development; Business Administration; Education;
Kyujanggak

Kyung In (Hanhwa Group)

Kyunyo (923-973)

Kyunyo was a famous monk and poet who revived the Hwaom (Flower Garland) school of Buddhism in the tenth century. Born in Hwangju of the Pyon clan, Kyunyo’s father died when he was young. Around the age of 14, he went with an older cousin to Puhing Temple in Hwanghae Province where he was ordained under the monk Shikhyon. He then went to study with Uisun at Yongt’ong Temple in Kaesong.

During the early 10th century, Korea’s Hwaom sect was divided between the followers of Kwanhye (Kyonhwon’s teacher) and Huirang (Wang Kôn’s teacher). These two factions were known as the southern and northern schools respectively. As a member of the northern lineage, Kyunyo attempted to unify the two factions. In order to secure support from other members of the clergy, he went with the monk Inyu on a tour of major monasteries around the nation.

Kyunyo also attempted to establish a theoretical basis for the unity of the school. After reexamining the early works of the school written by Zhiyan, Fazang and Shenxiu, Kyunyo developed his own unique interpretation of Hwaom doctrine. In his writings, he stressed the interpenetration (yunghoe) of the mind’s nature (song) and characteristics (sang). According to Kyunyo, nature (song) was equivalent with emptiness (kong), while characteristics (sang) were equivalent with form (saek). Kyunyo thus incorporated the Popsang (Dharma Characteristic) Sect’s doctrines into Hwaom thought, and in this way, helped to heal the schisms between the various doctrinal (kyo) schools in Korea.

During his life time, Kyunyo’s ideas gained wide acceptance. When a monk examination was instituted at Wangnyun Monastery in 958, Kyunyo’s reinterpretation of Hwaom teachings was designated as the orthodox view and others were considered collateral. However, his ideas came under criticism a century later by Uich’ôn who favoured the approach of the Tiantai school.

As an erudite commentator and populariser of Buddhism, Kyunyo composed poems in the vernacular and had his followers chant and memorise them. In particular, he composed a series of eleven poems, modelled on the ten great vows of the Bodhisattva Pohyon (Samantabhadra). Although the original vernacular version of these poems is no longer extant, the Chinese translation is contained in Haein Temple’s woodcut edition of the Tripitika.

In addition to his scholarly and missionary activities, Kyunyo was active in political circles. As Kyunyo’s popularity grew, he became an adviser to King Kwangjong (r. 949-975). Kyunyo’s ideology was adopted by Kwangjong in an attempt to consolidate his authority and justify his political reforms.

Kyunyo chôn (Life of Master Kyunyo)

Kyunyo hwaom sasang yôn’gu (A Study of the Huayan Thought of Kyunyo)
Labour, Ministry of [Government and Legislature]

Lacquerware

From ancient times, lacquerware has been popular throughout Korea. Even in modern times, the average Korean household is filled with many pieces of lacquerware, from small jewellery boxes to large wardrobes. The dark glossy lacquer finish used on the outside of lacquer boxes contrasts well with the boxes’ silver or gold-coloured handles and hinges. Although some pieces of lacquerware are plain, a great number of pieces are decorated with designs. Much of the modern lacquerware is decorated with mother-of-pearl, shiny, multi-coloured pieces of shell.

Lacquerware’s Early History

Lacquerware is made by applying a varnish, derived from a lacquer tree (*Rhus vernicifera*), to wood articles. Uniquely Asian in its origins, lacquerware boasts a long history. In fact, lacquerware pieces dating back to the ancient Yin (?-1122) and Zhou (1122-255 B.C.E.) Dynasties of China have been excavated. In China, the craft went through a great deal of development during the Warring States Period. In Korea, lacquerware from the late Bronze Age or early Stone Age has been recovered. The early Korean pieces include round and rectangular stemmed cups, cylindrical boxes, brush containers, fan handles, handles for axes, hoes and knives, scabbards and bows. These pieces were usually covered with a black lacquer containing ferrous oxide. In some rare cases, a ferrous oxide pigment was combined with crystallized cinnabar to create a green lacquer.

Three Kingdoms Period

Archaeological evidence indicates that lacquerware was produced throughout the Korean peninsula during the iron age. Although little Koguryo lacquerware has been found, excavated fragments indicate that technical advances were still being made in the art. Paekche lacquerware has been excavated from sites in the Seoul area and from the Mirük Temple site. As for Shilla sites, many lacquered cups and paintings have been found in the Shilla tombs and at Anap Pond in Kyongju. Lacquerware was evidently produced in large amounts during Shilla. According to written records, the government set up special crafts areas to meet the high demand. In addition to plain lacquerware, these shops also produced lacquerware inlaid with mother-of-pearl.

Koryo Period

In Koryo, craftsmen continued to produce lacquerware in great quantities, but most of the work of the period was decorated with mother-of-pearl inlay. Koryo lacquerware, much like the celadon from the same period, was often decorated with arabesque or chrysanthemum designs. During the tumultuous period following the Hideyoshi invasions (1592-1598), the art of lacquerware went into decline. Mother-of-pearl inlay, in particular, became much cruder.

Choson Period

In early Choson, a greater number of household and kitchen furnishings were decorated
with lacquer. There were some changes in the lacquer craft at this time. Tin and bronze wire were used less; in addition, powdered cattle-bone or shell was mixed into the black lacquer. The symmetrical designs of Koryo gave way to simple floral designs, depictions of birds, bamboo and plums. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Buddhist floral imagery was used, but arabesques and similar designs appeared larger in size. The design motifs also underwent change in Choson. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the two phoenix or two dragons motifs went out of fashion, while there was an increase in the depictions of birds and flowers. In the nineteenth c., on the other hand, depictions of natural scenes gained in popularity. As in Koryo, mother-of-pearl inlay was still the most popular form of lacquerware. Even so, the earlier tradition of plain lacquerware was maintained throughout Choson.

Language, Korean

Korean is spoken by about 70 million people living on the Korean peninsula and adjacent islands such as Cheju Island. Additionally, a sizeable number of people speak Korean outside of Korea: 2.3 million in China; 700,000 in Japan; 1.5 million in North America; and 400,000 in the former USSR. Thus, the Korean language is the eleventh largest in the world.

The Korean language is generally classified as a member of the Altaic family of languages, although some scholars disagree with this view. Scholars also differ in how they classify the various periods in the history of the Korean language. A general outline developed by Lee Ki-Moon in 1961, however, is the most widely accepted and has established the following divisions:

Old Korean - pre-history to the tenth c.
Middle Korean - eleventh c. to the sixteenth c.
Modern Korean - seventeenth c. to the present day

Through these periods, there were many changes in the Korean language as revealed in the following chart which diagrams the changes that vowels underwent during these periods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Korean</th>
<th>Middle Korean</th>
<th>Modern Korean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i u o</td>
<td>i ü u</td>
<td>i ü ü u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ê É</td>
<td>ò o</td>
<td>ò ò ò ò</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^ a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>æ a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The invention of the hunmin chôngüm (the proper sounds to instruct the people), or han'gul, under the royal decree of King Sejong (r. 1418-1450) in the mid-fifteenth c. is the single most important event in the history of the Korean language. Up until this point, various writing systems such as hyangch'al and idu, were used to write Korean phonetically in Chinese characters.

These writing systems were used in addition to classical Chinese, which was written according to the grammatical rules of classical Chinese. Since Korean and Chinese belong to two separate language families and are quite different both syntactically and phonetically, the hyangch'al and idu systems were awkward at best. Very few original sources of information on the hyangch'al and idu writing systems are extant, thus resulting in many differing and ambiguous interpretations of these ancient writing systems.

The earliest period for which there are materials available in relative abundance is the latter half of the fifteenth c. Materials that describe the spoken Korean language before the introduction of han'gul are scant, and such prominent features of Middle Korean, as vowel
harmony and tones, cannot be traced directly to Old Korean. Hence, it is difficult to
determine many features of the Korean language in these periods.

Classification of Korean as an Altaic Language

Altaic languages are traditionally listed as Chuvash-Turkic, Mongolian, Manchu-Tungus,
and, according to some scholars, Korean. Korean has, however, only recently been
counted among the Altaic languages by scholars, and by other scholars with certain
reservations and degrees of reluctance. Thus, there has been a great deal of controversy and
scholarly debate concerning the inclusion of Korean in the Altaic family of languages.

Gustav Ramstedt was the first scholar to point out the weakness in the Altaic theory by the
absence of numerals common to all the languages concerned. Later however, he considered
the numerous sound correspondences based on comparative methodology to be more
important than the lack of common numerals in the various languages under discussion.
Ramstedt thus emphasised commonalities among the languages concerned rather than the
lack of a particular correspondence that existed among languages in the Indo-European
language family. Ramstedt was the first scholar to assert that the common elements
between Korean and other Altaic languages were large enough to justify classifying Korean
as an Altaic language.

Old and Middle Korean are quite useful as data for Altaic linguists. Materials for the study
of Old Korean are fragmentary, being confined to names and titles mentioned in Chinese
documents. A much larger body of materials exists for the study of Middle Korean:
materials compiled in 1103-04 during Koryŏ, which contain about 350 pure Korean words,
and materials written in han'gul in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries during Chosŏn. Lee
Ki-moon (1968) suggested that Old Korean had many similarities with Old Japanese as
well. The presence of these linguistic commonalties seems to bridge the now seemingly
impassable gulf presented by the considerable deviations between the modern Korean and
Japanese languages and furthermore, helps explain their relationship in greater detail.

Old Korean

The three kingdoms of Koguryŏ, Shilla, and Paekche dominated the Korean peninsula from
the first c. BCE to the ninth c. CE. Little is known, however, about the languages spoken
in each of these kingdoms. Insofar as the Shilla Kingdom is concerned, there are twenty­
four hyangga (native songs) that were written in hyangch'al, a phonetic transcription
system using Chinese characters to represent specific phonemes, personal names, place
names, and official titles, which can be used by modern scholars to gain some insight into
the phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon of the language. No materials, except for
a very few proper nouns, that describe the languages of Koguryŏ and Paekche are extant,
thus forcing scholars to make educated guesses about these languages. The sources that do
exist represent the language of the time because they are written in the cryptic hyangch'al
and idu systems which borrowed classical Chinese, thus making it difficult for scholars to
accurately reconstruct the spoken languages of the Three Kingdoms period.

In general, the language of Shilla has much in common with Middle Korean in both its
vocabulary and grammar. An example of similarities in vocabulary is seen in the Shilla
word 'pator' (sea) and its Middle Korean equivalent 'paror.' A further example is found in
the Shilla word 'i< c < - ' (to dislike, to loathe), which is 'to tire' in Middle Korean. These
examples show that there had been changes in sound and meaning. Furthermore, many
words in the language of Shilla cannot be found in Middle Korean; for example, 'ir' (well,
spring), and 'sir' (valley). The word 'ir' can also be found in the language of Koguryŏ as
'dr' (well, spring). A derivation of 'sir' can be found in Middle Korean as 'sinayh' (brook);
'sinayh' is most likely a compound word of 'sir' (valley) and 'nayh' (stream).
Because all of the remaining documents from Shilla are written in classical Chinese, it is difficult to analyse the phonological system of the languages at the time. Of the three types of stops and affricates -- lenis, fortis, aspirated -- in modern Korean, it is clear that the fortis sound did not exist and that the aspirated sound was extremely rare in the Shilla language. Even less is known about the pronunciation of vowels, but some scholars contend that a system of vowel harmony existed.

The morpho-syntax of the Shilla language, as it appears in the *hyangga*, shows a strong correspondence with that of Middle Korean in sentence structure and grammatical forms among other areas. The following case suffixes after nouns in the Shilla language have been verified: nominative -i, -yi; genitive -s, -si/iy; accusative -r; and instrumental -ru. The conjugational system of the Shilla language is similar to that of Middle Korean. Verbal noun endings '-r', '-n', converbial endings '-ko', 'a', '-ra', 'may', '-myo', and '-taka' among others have been discovered in the *hyangga*.

One of the most distinctive features of Korean grammar, the system of honorifics, has also been documented in the Shilla language. The honorific form '-si-' and the humble form '-sorp-' both existed in the Shilla language. Although their exact forms are unknown, it is also known that there were polite suffixes. This appears to be quite similar to the system of polite markers used in Middle Korean.

The lexical items from the languages of Paekche and Koguryo that have been discovered are few in number, but through these items it has been possible to link these languages with the language of Shilla. The language of Paekche appears to be relatively close to the language of Shilla, whereas the language of Koguryo is thought to be somewhat more distant from that of Shilla. This distinction is due to languages diverging at different times. An example of a difference in vocabulary among the three languages is the word for 'sông' ('castle', 'wall of defence'), which is 'cas' in the Shilla language; 'kiy' in the Paekche language; and 'Xor' in the Koguryo language. Two words ('sasi' and 'ki') that mean 'castle' in Old Japanese originated from the 'sasi' in the language of Shilla and 'ki' in the language of Paekche. The words for 'king' are similar in all three languages: 'xan' and 'kim' in the Shilla language; 'ki-cc' in the Paekche language; and 'kay' in the Koguryo language. The words 'cas' (castle) and 'nimgum' ('king', 'nim' derived from 'master') inherited from the Shilla language are also found in Middle Korean.

**Middle Korean**

Middle Korean (MK) refers to the language used from the tenth c. through the end of the sixteenth c., and can be further divided into two sub-categories: Early Middle Korean (EMK), used from the tenth to the fourteenth c., and Late Middle Korean (LMK) used from the fifteenth c. through the end of the sixteenth c. The use of MK covers a five hundred-year period that includes the Koryo dynasty (918-1392) and the first half of the Choson dynasty (1392-1910). The founders of the Choson dynasty moved the capital of Korea from Kaesong to Seoul, forty kilometres to the south. Because both Kaesong and Seoul are in the centre of the Korean peninsula, the central regional dialect of Korean continued to be the most influential dialect, and thus eventually became the basis for the modern standard in the Korean language.

References to EMK are written exclusively in classical Chinese. The most important source of information on EMK is the Song Chinese record *Jilin leishi* (Memorabilia of Kyerim), published at the beginning of the twelfth c. This work contains a Chinese-Korean glossary of about 350 words, which has been an invaluable source of data on early Korean. Another source of data is the *Hyangyak kugoppang* (Emergency Remedies of Folk Medicine), which is written in classical Chinese, that describes the sound and meaning of some 180 names of plants, animals, and metals used in traditional Korean folk medicine.
Documents concerning LMK are numerous because of the scholarship involved in the creation of han'gul, the Korean alphabet, in 1443. In addition to representing the sounds (vowels, consonants, and even tones) of the Korean language faithfully, han'gul depicted the phonetic composition of each sound graphically. Many books were published in han'gul, and several kings encouraged the translation of important books written in classical Chinese into han'gul in the years immediately following its development. Fortunately, these references are still extant. Some examples of the important references to LMK are as follows: (1) Hunmin ch6ng'iim (Correct Sounds for the Instruction of the People; also the first official name for han'gul), the first public explanation of the rationale for and the use of han'gul, published in 1446; (2) Yongbi ëch'on ka (Songs of Flying Dragons), an eulogy cycle on the foundation of the Chosön dynasty, published in 1447; (3) Wörin sôkpo (The Buddha’s Genealogy), published in 1459, a compilation of the Sôkpo sangjûl (Episodes from the Life of Buddha), an epic concerning the life of Buddha (1447); (4) NûngÔm kyông ônhae, one of many han'gul translations of Buddhist sutras, published in 1461; (5) the han'gul translation of the Tâng Chinese poet Tu Fu's work in 1481; (6) the han'gul translation of basic Confucian texts in the sixteenth c.; (7) margin notes on the sounds and meaning of each Chinese character written in han'gul that accompanied classical Chinese texts such as the Hunmong chahoe and the Sinjông yuhap.

Middle Korean Phonology

The han'gul writing system that was introduced in the Hunmin chông'um reflects the phonological system of LMK very closely. There were seven (pure) vowel sounds in LMK (ʌ, a, o / ð, i, u / i). The semi-vowel 'y' appeared in four on-glide diphthongs (ya, yø, yo, yu; with yʌ and yì also extant in EMK) and in six off-glide diphthongs that combined 'y' after vowels (ʌy, ay, ðy, oy, uy, iy). Further, there was 'w' that appeared in three on-glide diphthongs (wa, wø, wi).

The rules governing vowel harmony were clear in Middle Korean. These rules dictated that yang (male or light) vowels ʌ, a, o and yin (female or dark) vowels i, ð, u should not co-occur in a morpheme, but 'i' as a neutral vowel may co-occur with all others. Suffixes that began with a vowel in MK were subject to vowel harmony when they were attached to a stem, but suffixes that began with a consonant were not subject to any of the phonological processes of harmonisation when they were attached to a stem.

Consonants in LMK are classified into the following groups: (1) lenis -- voiceless, slightly aspirated obstruents; (2) voiceless, strongly aspirated obstruents; (3) fortis -- voiceless, unaspirated obstruents. From the available documents, there is no doubt that 's' and 'h' had fortis equivalents in LMK, but there is no proof that 'p', 't', and 'k' had fortis equivalents. There are examples of 'p', 't' and 'k' being written as seemingly fortis sounds with the addition of 's', but how the addition of 's' influenced pronunciation at this time is difficult to determine; (4) non-initial voiced fricative consonants that only appear in an intervocalic environment such as two vowels. 'B' changed to 'w' in the middle of the fifteenth c., 'h' fell out of use around the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, and 'z' fell out of use in the middle of the sixteenth c. LMK also had word-initial consonant clusters such as 'pt', 'ps', 'pc', 'pth-', in words such as 'ptit' (intention), 'psi' (seed), 'pcw' (to weave), and 'pthw' (to fill up). These compound consonants were resultant from the weakening of a vowel sound that originally fell between the two consonants. All of these consonants have since changed to fortis sounds in modern Korean.

With the data that has been transmitted to the present age, we are also able to understand the tonal qualities of LMK, and analyse the changes that have occurred in the Korean language since that time. The Hunmin chông'um used a system of dots in the left margin (the text
being written vertically) next to each syllable to indicate the appropriate tone. Two tones existed in LMK: low and high, and the latter was indicated by a dot in the margin. There were also those syllables (most likely consisting of two morae) that began with a low tone and ended with a high one. These rising tones were indicated as in the following examples ‘:son’ (guest) and ‘.son’ (hand); ‘.mal’ (a unit of volume) and ‘:mal’ (speech/language); ‘ka.ji’ (kind/variety), ‘.kaji’ (branch) and ‘.ka.ji’ (wooden shoes). The nominative forms of such words as ‘put’yo (Buddha) and ‘t-ri’ (bridge) changed to ‘pu:t’ye’ and ‘t\:ri’ respectively since the nominative suffix ‘i’ was a high tone.

Writing System/Phonology

The writing system of Middle-Korean shows a highly advanced level of phonology which no doubt contributed to the development of an excellent phonetic alphabet, han'gül, at that time. This is also an important source of material for Altaic linguists because of its phonetic reliability. The Korean people had already developed the hyangch'al and idu systems of transcription by simplifying the written form of various Chinese characters. This process of simplification of Chinese characters was also the precursor of the Japanese katagana system of writing. While its initiators in Korea discarded this system in order to transcribe the various sounds more freely, a Japanese monk adopted and developed it into an indigenous Japanese writing system.

Scientific linguistic studies were established in Korea during the Chosŏn dynasty in the early fifteenth c. In 1443, King Sejong, after brushing aside opposition by certain elements of the Confucian literati in his court, enlisted scholars such as Sŏng Sammun (1418-1456), Ch'ŏng Inji (1396-1478) and Shin Sukchu (1417-1475) of the Hall of Worthies (Chipyŏnjon), and created the first original writing system that described the Korean language phonetically. The basic elements of han'gül remain in their original form, except for four letters that have fallen out of use. Most writing systems are the result of a long period of evolution; han'gül is the only writing system that was not devised on the basis of an imitation of foreign script but developed as a symbolic representation of the actions of the speech organs. The basic consonants ‘z (k) \ (n) □ (m) ∧ (s) and ○ (ng) are based on the appearance of the respective organs of speech involved in their articulations. Although 'symbolisation' is attributed as an original idea of the creators of this fascinating alphabet, it is most likely the product of extensive phonological study.

One of the most notable differences between Chinese phonology and the Korean writing system is the fact that in Korean the syllables are divided into three parts -- initial, medial and final -- whereas Chinese uses a bipartite division of syllable-initial and syllable-final. The tripartite division coincides with the modern analysis of the syllable into peak and margins (onset, peak, and coda). Frustrated by the unreliability of the bipartite division in Chinese phonology and the lack of a phonetic alphabet, King Sejong and his court scholars appear to have conducted an independent study of the Korean vowel system and the structure of syllable peaks which left them with no choice but to create a new script based on this study. Their phonemic analysis accomplished over and above Chinese phonology is successful even from the modern point of view, and might very well constitute a unique example in the pre-modern world of the scientific reduction of a contemporary language to writing in terms of a phonemic analysis that closely resembles modern methodology.

Korean Grammar and Lexicon

Some of the characteristic features of Korean in the order of lexicon, syntax, and semantics are as follows.

In the Korean lexicon, one is immediately struck by the high proportion of loan words. The majority of these loan words consist of borrowings from Chinese, often referred to as Sino-Korean words. In the Kun sajôn (Great Dictionary) published by Han'gül Hakhoe
(Korean Language Society), nearly fifty-four per cent of the more than 150,000 words are of Chinese origin. Non-Chinese loan words account for a further 2.5 per cent of the Korean lexicon, thus leaving pure Korean words to represent but 43.5 per cent of the entire lexicon.

It is difficult to say whether Korean developed closed syllables on its own, because of a latent internal force, or whether such a phonetic development was externally prompted by loan words from Chinese. It is almost certain, however, that Chinese borrowing contributed to an increase in the amount of closed syllables and to the breathiness of Korean sounds by introducing the heavy use of aspiration. The net effect of this is that Korean has become more harsh and strident than it would have but for the Chinese contribution.

In regards to syntax, the Korean language is characterised by a very richly developed set of derivative and conjugational affixes. These affixes agglutinate one after another and indicate different styles of speech, express every conceivable mood and aspect, and function as honorific markers, case markers, connectives, post-positions, and sentence-type markers among other functions. Nouns, both subject and object nouns, are frequently deleted in Korean even in non-imperative sentences. The subject and object of these sentences remains clear because honorific and sentence-type markers used after nouns and in the verb at the end of the sentence indicate the relationship between the speaker and the addressee.

A semantic characteristic of Korean is the ability to express minute difference in nuances with a richly developed system of phonetic symbolism. A highly developed system of kinship words and titles all reflect the strong influence of Confucianism on traditional Korean culture and the importance of the system of honorifics in the Korean language. The various levels of speech found in Korean are used by the speaker to establish the relationship between himself and the addressee. Along with the different levels of speech is a large lexicon of honorific and humble words that express one's deference to his social superiors.

The net effect of the features discussed so far -- a dual lexicon, an intricate honorific system, different levels of speech, an indefinite concatenation of clauses, a rich set of tense, mood, and aspect markers -- is to make Korean a difficult language to learn as a second language, particularly for learners from an Indo-European language background. Nonetheless, since grammatical rules in Korean are quite straightforward and relatively consistent, acquiring fundamental linguistic skills for the non-native speaker is often simply a matter of practice and time.

In phonology, there has been a tendency to simplify final consonants. Korean is the only language that has three types of stops, which are all voiceless, two of which are distinguished by different degrees of aspiration. The initial occurrence of 'r', however, is different. The initial 'r' becomes a Korean phoneme, e.g., rak'et'i (라켓) 'racket', radio (라디오) 'radio', reink'ot'u (레인코트) 'raincoat', and so on.

Concerning the Korean lexicon, the outlook is slightly more complicated with the new wave of loan words that has been entering Korea from the West. The dual system of pure Korean and Sino-Korean lexical items will continue to function as it has, but the semantic distinctions associated with the dual system will gradually disappear amidst the revival of pure Korean words and an even greater interaction with the outside world. Aside from a sizeable number of items belonging to the dual lexicon, there is actually little competition between Sino-Korean words and pure Korean words since pure Korean words are largely confined to concrete and emotive words, whereas Sino-Korean words are largely abstract and technical words. Thus, Korean and Sino-Korean words continue their parallel existence. Chinese characters and Chinese loan words became Koreanized in usage and pronunciation when they entered the Korean language and have been used by Koreans over almost two thousand years, and as a result, they are now an integral part of the Korean
language.

There has also been a tendency toward greater simplification in syntax. A complex agglutination of affixes to denote many different styles and levels of speech will gradually be simplified. Today, a student in junior high school can distinguish the precise difference in the level of speech to be used when he is talking to his father about his grandfather from when he is talking about his (the student's) father to his grandfather. Indefinite concatenation of sentences is rapidly disappearing from usage, perhaps because of the strong influence of the heavy use of punctuation marks.

The Korean language will continue to evolve and transform as do all living languages, and this will be most easily seen in changes to the lexicon. The influx of foreign words from Western countries is presently quite notable in the speech of young and well-educated Koreans, and this is expected to increase in the future. Additionally, as Korean society moves towards becoming more egalitarian insofar as relations between the sexes and social classes, the rigid system of honorifics and hierarchical levels of speech will become increasingly less important. This phenomenon has already been manifested in that the honorific level of speech used with the royalty of the Chosŏn period has largely disappeared from use in modern Korea. Moreover, with the reunification of the Korean peninsula being a distinct possibility in the foreseeable future, the combination of the two forms of Korean spoken in the North and South, which have evolved quite separately over the past fifty years, will likely evoke linguistic changes.

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S O Lee

Early Writing Systems

Before the invention of the han'gul script in the mid-fifteenth c., Korean scholars grappled with the problem of writing the Korean language without having a script specifically designed for the purpose. While classical Chinese was commonly used for writing official and other documents, it could not accurately convey the Korean language. The sound and grammatical systems of Chinese are quite different to those of Korean, and this created many difficulties in communicating unique aspects of Korean. Accordingly, in order to overcome the disadvantages of using a foreign writing system for the Korean language, scholars devised several systems that used Chinese characters for either their meaning or their sound. These had fixed sets of rules and one such system eventually became the origin of the Japanese writing system man'yō-gana. The extant sources on these early writing systems are, however, quite fragmentary and hence difficult to interpret and analyse. Nevertheless, as many of the oldest documents of the early Korean states are written in either hyangch'ul, idu or kugyŏl, an understanding of these writing systems is quite important to present-day Korean studies scholars.
Idu

Idu was a writing system created during Shilla which used Chinese characters whose syntax was changed somewhat to reflect the Korean grammatical structure. This writing system was known by various names including ido and issō, but was designated as idu in the preface of the Sejong shillok (Veritable Records of King Sejong) in the fifteenth c., and this name has persisted. Idu has been incorrectly used as a generic term for all writing systems that used Chinese characters in the past, but it does have differing characteristics from either hyangch’al or kugyōl, and so must be treated as a separate writing system.

Unlike hyangch’al, idu continued to be used through the nineteenth c. as a writing system by low-level government clerks in certain specialised areas. Two of the later documents that record various grammatical aspects of the idu writing system are the Kogüm sōgnim (Past and Present Glossaries) compiled by Yi Uibong in 1789, and Oju yōnmun changjön san’go (Random Expatiations of Oju) written by Yi Kyūyŏng in the early nineteenth c. Therefore, modern scholars have been able to analyse many of the qualities of the idu writing system and determine its various grammatical functions and characteristics.

There are many historical documents recorded in idu, going back to the Three Kingdoms. Two examples of these are the Imshin sōsokki (Oath of Inscription) carved on a stone tablet in 612, and the Tan’yang chōksŏng pi, which is a stele, thought to have been carved in 551. Many extant materials written in idu have come down from both Koryŏ and Chosŏn, and so provide modern scholars with a wealth of valuable data for analysis.

Kugyōl

Kugyōl was a writing system largely used in the interpretation or translation of Buddhist and Confucian Chinese texts. In this system, grammatical particles were inserted into Chinese texts using either special, fixed patterns of Chinese characters for certain grammatical functions, or after the invention of han’gul, using han’gul grammatical particles. Thus, Chinese characters could be used as nouns or verbs within a text, but with all the supporting grammatical elements written in special characters to allow the text to be read according to Korean grammar.

The use of kugyōl was quite widespread in Korea, most likely from the time of the introduction of Chinese characters during the Three Kingdoms. The reason for this is that although the meaning of the Chinese characters posed little problem for Korean readers, there were substantial differences in the grammar of the Chinese and the Korean languages, and so in order to better understand the texts, Koreans devised a way to insert Korean grammar. When we read the record stating that the Shilla scholar Sŏl Ch’ŏng (660-730) read nine Chinese classics in the native Shilla language, it is understood that he used kugyōl as a means to explicate the text.

Since the use of kugyōl greatly assisted the reading of difficult Chinese texts, it is not surprising that many of the Confucian Classics and the Buddhist cannon were published throughout Koryŏ and Chosŏn using kugyōl. There were about one-hundred and ten characters used in kugyōl, including those for phonetic value and grammatical functions. By the end of the fifteenth c., han’gul characters were common in many texts, since their use was even more straightforward than those of earlier times. Kugyōl remained an important writing system until the end of Chosŏn.

Hyangch’al

Hyangch’al is a writing system that used Chinese characters for both their meaning and sound to record the Korean language, before the invention of han’gul. Hyangch’al is considered to be a more sophisticated writing system than its predecessor, the idu, and in
general expressed Korean nouns with Chinese characters that carried the same meaning, while verb stems, inflections and other grammatical parts were written by the arbitrary use of Chinese characters that had the desired pronunciation. Perhaps the most notable examples of literature in hyangch’al are the hyangga song-poems recorded in the Samguk yusa (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms). This writing system was largely used for recording lyrical items in Shilla and Koryŏ, but fell out of use by the fifteenth c.

Extant records in hyangch’al script are quite limited, with the largest being the twenty-six hyangga recorded in the Samguk yusa and the Samguk sagi (History of the Three Kingdoms). Other works recorded in this system include the thirteenth c. Hyangyak kugüppang (Emergency Remedies of Folk Medicine), which details information concerning the plants, animals and other materials of traditional Korean folk medicine and which used hyangch’al to accurately record the pronunciation of the ingredients.

Bibliography

Learned Societies (see under individual Society, Institute, Association, etc)

Legal System

Historical Development

The legal history can be divided into five periods.

A. Three kingdoms and the Shilla dynasty

According to Samguk sagi [History of the Three Kingdoms], written in 1145, the first promulgation of yul (code) by a Koguryŏ dynasty (37 668 CE) king could be dated in 373 and yully6ng (code and decrees) were enacted by a Shilla dynasty king in 520. An epigraph written in 924 during the Shilla dynasty commemorates the promulgation of a code.

Despite the existence of these historical records and the chronology of political events between the Shilla and Tang China (618 -907) dynasties, little is known about the contents of codes and decrees that had been promulgated and enforced during the unified Shilla period. In 1933, however, a partial answer to the enigma was offered by the discovery of the so-called Civil Governance Document of Shilla villages (presumably dated 755), which indicates the influence of Tang administrative decrees on Shilla’s management of households and tilled land.

B. The Koryŏ dynasty

Information regarding legal codes and their functions during the Koryŏ dynasty (918 -1392) is also sketchy. The Hyongp6p chi [Treatise on Penal Law] of the Koryŏsa [History of Koryŏ], written in 1453, simply lists the headings of seventy-one articles of the code whose texts cannot be found elsewhere. However, a perusal of the list reveals that the organization of the code and the classes of penalties with a grading scale were influenced by Tang and Song China (960 -1279) dynasty codes.

C. The Chosŏn Dynasty

T’aejo (r.1392-1398), the founder of the Chosŏn dynasty established an office to collect,
compile and publish all laws and decrees from the time of the last king of the Koryŏ dynasty down to his own time. The *Kyŏngje yukschôn* (Six Codes of Governance) which was the culmination of his efforts, is not extant today. During T'aejo's reign, the *Tae Myŏngnyul chikhae* (Directly Interpreted Great Ming Lû) was promulgated in 1395. The Code written in Idu Korean is one of the oldest extant legal documents. In the process of translating Ming Lû, indigenous Korean elements were incorporated into the Korean text and used as common law to the legal codes throughout the Chosŏn Dynasty.

Kings succeeding T'aejo inherited the codification endeavour. In the annals of the law codification throughout the Chosŏn dynasty, the enactment of the *Kyŏngguk taejŏn* (Great Code of State Governance), completed in its final format of six sub-codes in 1485, is an important work, as it became the basic code of state administration. The six sub-codes corresponded to the six ministerial divisions of the government: personnel (i), revenue (ho), rites (ye), military (pyŏng), punishment (hyŏng), and public works (kong). One of six sub-codes on punishment dealt specifically with procedures involving trials, prison administration and status record on slaves and their ownership.

Enactment of the *Kyŏngguk taejŏn* was followed by a series of newly supplemented codes honoring the will of the founding father of the dynasty. The last of these, the *Taejŏn hoet'ong* [The Great Code Comprehensively Supplemented], was completed in 1866.

As a result of the 1894 Kabo Reforms, official gazettes appeared announcing newly promulgated laws. Another significant legal development was the enactment of the 1905 *Hyongpŏp taejŏn* [Complete Criminal Code], which was based on the traditional law and the 1880 Japanese Penal Code.

During this period, justice was administered by primarily local magistrates, confucian scholar officials, whose duties also included the collection of taxes and administration of corvée labor. According to extant documents, there was litigation among Yangbans over the interpretation of wills, ownership of private slaves and transactions over land and houses.

D. Japanese Colonial Control

The Government-General of Korea functioned through the Japanese Governor-General as a result of the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910. All decrees of the Governor-General had to receive the approval of the Japanese Emperor and jurisdiction over finances and legislation on broad policies concerning Korea were in the hands of the Imperial Diet in Tokyo. The colonial government in Korea consisted of the secretariat and seven bureaus (kyoku), one of which supervised the administration of justice. During this colonial period, at least four discernible bodies of law were in force: first, special statutes particularly directed to Korean affairs adopted by the Japanese Imperial Diet; second, applied Japanese codes and statutes *mutatis mutandis* by virtue of the Governor-General's action; third, Korean customary law on family relations and inheritance based on the 1912 Korean Civil Decree; and fourth, other legal measures issued by the Government-General.

The judiciary was built under a three-instance system: the district and the branch courts; the courts of review; and the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court, located in Seoul, consisted of a chief judge and nine judges. Attached to the courts of each instance were the prosecutor's offices. Prosecutors exercised wide authority by enjoChosŏning the same status as the judges in importance and rank. In 1907, the first bar association was formed in Seoul. Subsequently, bar association activities were subject to strict supervision of the Governor-General.

E. The Two Koreas

The peninsula's partition in 1945 led to the creation of the Republic of Korea in the South
and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the North. In terms of legal systems, the former adheres to the Civil Law tradition, while the latter follows the Socialist legal system.

Sources and Branches of the Law

A. South Korea

The emphasis on codified laws is one of the principal features of the South Korean legal system. A set of five legal codes (Civil Code, Criminal Code, Commercial Code, Code of Civil Procedure, and Code of Criminal Procedure), plus the Constitution, are collectively known as the Yukpōp, literally the six codes. These codes are the main body of laws. Laws enacted and promulgated by state authorities pursuant to the Constitution are recognized as the primary source of law and are permeated by the concept that the mission of law is fulfilled best by reliance upon enacted law. Thus a variety of terms are used to designate South Korean laws, usually denoting the issuing authorities. Laws may be divided into four main categories: statutes passed by the legislature; decrees issued by the President of the Republic, Cabinet and various ministries; rules and regulations by other state agencies and local governments; and international agreements. As to the effects of customary law, the Civil Code prescribes that in the absence of a statute, customary law is to be relied upon and if the latter is lacking, sound reasoning is to serve as the basis for deciding civil cases. The Commercial Code also stipulates that in commercial cases, commercial custom applies in the absence of provisions in the code, and in the absence of commercial custom, the provisions of the Civil Code are to apply. This legal formula cannot be applied to criminal cases, however, due to the constitutional requirement of nulla poena sine lege. Judicial precedents are not granted official status as law. Thus every court is theoretically free not to follow the judicial decisions of courts even when they are superior. In practice, however, a judge, in deciding a case, will closely examine relevant previous decisions. Furthermore, the lower courts can be expected to pay a great deal of attention and respect to judgments of superior courts, especially the higher court in their own district.

There are at least ten pedagogically identifiable branches of law.

1. Constitutional and Administrative Law

The first Constitution was adopted in 1948 and has been amended nine times. The present Constitution of 1987 stipulates the directly elected President, the unicameral legislature, and creates the Constitutional Court. Administrative law is a branch of law that controls or is intended to control the administrative agencies and their operations and remedies. The main body of this branch of law is the Government Organization Law, Local Autonomy Law, National Public Servants Law, Administrative Litigation Law, and laws related to land reform. Another important legislative measure of recent origin in the field of Administrative Law is the Foreign Capital Inducement Law, which is designed to induce and administer foreign equity investments, foreign loans, and foreign technology for the development of the economy. This statute and the tax laws are closely interrelated.

2. Criminal Law

Criminal law is a body of legal rules which prescribes crimes and their punishments. The main source of criminal law is the Criminal Code. There are a number of ancillary laws which include the National Security Law and Juvenile Law.

3. The Law of Criminal Procedure

The law of criminal procedure stipulates procedural rules connected with the prosecution of a person charged or to be charged with the commission of a crime. The primary source of
this field of law is the Code of Criminal Procedure, which sets out general rules, trial procedure at first instance, appeals, special trial proceedings, and execution of judgments.

4. Labour Law

Labour law consists of those constitutional provisions on labour's fundamental rights, statutes, executive decrees, and administrative regulations that prescribe labour relations. The basic statutes are the Labour Union Law, Labour Dispute Adjustment Law, Labour Standard Law, and Labour Committee Law.

5. Public International Law

Public international law is the law of the world community which relates to states, international organizations, and private individuals. The sources of public international law are international customary law and international agreements. The present Constitution sanctions that treaties and the generally recognized rules of international law have the same force as domestic law.

6. Civil Law

Civil law is known as a general private law which consists of the Civil Code together with several ancillary laws. In its form, the Civil Code follows the so-called pandect system by dividing into five books. The first three books deal with general provisions, property rights, and obligations in general, while the fourth and fifth books cover family and successions, which base primarily on customs.

7. Commercial Law

Commercial law is the body of special rules of private law applicable only to those legal relations which arise from commercial transactions. The most important source of commercial law is the Commercial Code, which consists of five books: General Part, Commercial Transactions, Commercial Companies, Insurances, and Maritime Commerce. The important ancillary laws are the Enforcement Law of the Commercial Code, the Law on Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes, the Cheques Law, and the Corporate Reorganization Law.

8. The Law of Civil Procedure

The Law of Civil Procedure is a branch of law which is concerned with civil litigation to settle compulsorily disputes among private individuals. The main source of law regulating civil actions is the Code of Civil Procedure, which consists of seven chapters: General Rules, Proceedings in the First Instance, Appeal, Retrial, Summary Procedure, Public Notice Procedure, and Compulsory Execution. Main ancillary laws are the Arbitration Law and the Law of Procedure on Non-contentious Matters.

Both laws are designed to encourage the settlement of disputes by means of arbitration or mediation.

9. Private International Law

The main source of private international law is Private Law Involving Foreign Elements, which is designed to "determine the applicable law to the matters involving foreign elements wherein aliens within the Republic of Korea, or the nationals of the Republic of Korea abroad, become parties." This law sets out the choice-of-law rules and is organized into three parts: General Rules, Rules Concerning Civil Matters and Rules Concerning Commercial Matters. The important ancillary laws are Nationality Law, Alien Land
Acquisition Law, Special Law Concerning Adoption of Orphans and the Code of Civil Procedure, which contains rules on international jurisdiction; and recognition and enforcement of foreign judgments.

10. Laws Governing Industrial and Intellectual Property Rights

The law protects the following industrial and intellectual property rights: patent, utility model, trademark, copyrights and design. These rights are recognized and protected only when they are registered upon application. South Korea is a signatory to the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Properties, to the Patent Cooperation Treaty and to the Universal Copyright Convention.

B. North Korea

North Korea uses the Chuch’e idea of the worker's party as its national ideology, being a creative application of Marxism - Leninism to North Korean reality, and adopts command economies under the leadership of the Communist Party. The state is to play a strong role in assuring its citizens the good life. The law in North Korea like any Socialist legal system is highly ideological and is deployed as a political instrument to enhance the proletarian and Communist revolution.

Laws, as used in the generic term, adopted and issued by various state organs pursuant to the 1972 Constitution as amended on April 9, 1992, include laws, ordinances and decisions of the Supreme People's Assembly (S.P.A.), the decisions and directives of the S.P.A.'s Standing Committee; the orders of the President of the People's Republic; the decrees, decisions and directives of the Central People's Committee (C.P.C.); decisions of the Administrative Council; directives of the Central Administrative agencies; decisions of the local people's assemblies; decisions and directives of local people's committees; decisions and directives of local administrative and economic committees; and directives of the Central Court and the Procurator-General.

As for structural and divisional branches of North Korean law, they appear on the surface similar to those of South Korea. However, contents of laws are permeated with Socialist ideology without identifiable public and private law demarcation. The following nine major branches of law are noteworthy.

1. Constitutional Law

The first Constitution of 1948 was patterned after the 1936 Stalin Constitution. It was amended in 1972 and extensively amended in 1992. It stipulates the unicameral S.P.A. which is the highest organ of state power and is the exclusive legislative body. Its standing committee is provided to exercise supreme power in the S.P.A.'s absence and is to interpret currently effective laws and ordinances.

The 1992 amended Constitution still invests considerable power in the President of the People's Republic; and maintains the C.P.C., which carries out an institutional check on the central state bureaucracy by relieving the bureaucracy of policy-making functions and leads judicial and procuratorial activities. One of the unique features of the 1972 Constitution was the abolishment of the tax system as being "a hangover of the old society." However, the 1992 Constitution eliminates this phrase by substituting "non-existence of tax system in our country."

2. Criminal Law

In 1987, North Korea undertook a major revision of its Criminal Law Code. The primary task of the Criminal Law is to protect national sovereignty and Socialist institutions. It is to
guarantee people's self reliance and creative life through the struggle with crimes. The Code maintains the analogy clause and introduces education through labor at the workplace, as a new category of penalty.

3. Criminal Procedure

In 1992, North Korea adopted a newly revised Code of Criminal Procedure without providing clear division of power between the judge and procurator. Its main features are to guarantee human rights in criminal proceedings and to deny the evidence obtained through the third degree confession.

4. Labour Law

The primary source of Labour Law is the 1978 Labour Code which is designed to fully mobilize and utilize human resources, who are armed with the Chuch'e ideology and oriented with the cause of Socialist construction. For this purpose, administration and operation of labour management are subject to strict legal regulations and state control. Special features of the Code include a fourteen-day regular annual vacation for all workers, a seventy-seven-day maternity leave, Sunday as a day of rest, age sixteen to be the minimum work age, and retirement age limit at fifty-five for women and sixty for men. A daily schedule for workers is composed of eight hours of labour, eight hours of indoctrination, and eight hours of rest.

5. Land Law

Land law constitutes a separate branch of law which regulates legal relations involving land use. This uniqueness derives from the fundamental principle that the state is the exclusive owner of all land as one of the basic means of production. As the state is the sole proprietor of land, only the state, through its agencies, is entitled to allocate or withdraw land tenure to natural or judicial persons for the actual use of land. Based on these premises, the 1977 Land Law prohibits selling of land belonging to the state or cooperative organizations. It also prescribes land development and conservation and limits the size of family plot.

6. Civil Code

The S.P.A. adopted the Civil Code in 1991. The Code regulates property relationship entered into between three entities: state agencies, cooperative organizations and citizens. The Code lists extensive categories of state ownership (or monopoly) of property. Property rights exercised by citizens are limited to strictly private use and the consumption needs.

7. Family Law

Following the structural pattern of the Socialist legal system, the Family Law Code was adopted in 1990. The code bases on four principles: sexual equality; monogamy; special protection provided for mother and children; and organic combination of private and state interests and interests of family and society.

8. Civil Procedure

The 1976 Code of Civil Procedure enunciates its raison d'être as a revolutionary ideological weapon for the masses. Following statutory constriction used by other Socialist states, a relatively smaller number of articles (177 articles) is utilized in the Code. In disposing civil cases, judges are expected to follow the President's teachings and directives from the party. Another feature is that only six articles are allocated to deal with the execution of court judgments. Non-recognition of private ownership of real property and
grave consequences of non-compliance of court decisions may be the reasons. The Code has taken a liberal approach to *res judicata* effects of the final judgment by opening the avenue of extraordinary appeal.

9. Foreign Investment Law

The 1984 Joint Venture Law covers such subjects as guiding principles of joint venture; organization of a joint venture company; board of directors and business operations; audit and income distribution; and dissolution of a joint venture company and settlement of disputes. Implementation of the 1984 Joint Venture Law with accompanying supplementary statutes did not bring the expected foreign investment; thus necessitating the adoption of the new Foreign Investment Law in 1992. It stipulates the establishment of a special economic zone where 100% foreign owned investment is allowed; an extended period of lease on land; and more elaborate tax incentives.

10. International Law

The present Constitution is silent as to the status of international treaties to which North Korea is a party although there are numerous instances of North Korea signing bilateral and multilateral treaties. The present Constitution grants a power to the S.P.A. and C.P.C. who ratify or abrogate treaties concluded with foreign states and the President of the People's Republic promulgates actions taken by these two organs.

**Judicial Administration**

A. South Korea

1. Organization of Courts

Courts are organized on the three-tier system, pursuant to the 1987 Court Organization Law. District courts, their branch courts, and family courts are courts of first instance. Appellate courts are intermediate, and the Supreme Court is the highest court of appeal. Ten district courts have civil law and criminal law divisions, except in Seoul, where separate Civil District and Criminal District Courts have been created. The Seoul Family Court hears cases related to domestic relations. Four appellate courts are organized respectively into civil, criminal, and special divisions which try administrative cases. The Supreme Court exercises general jurisdiction over military courts. The Supreme Court is composed of a chief justice and thirteen associate justices and exercises rule-making power to supervise judicial administration.

2. The Constitutional Court

The Constitutional Court is composed of nine adjudicators, of whom three are designated by the President, three are chosen from among persons selected by the National Assembly and three from persons nominated by the Chief Justice. The Court adjudicates the following matters: constitutionality of a law when requested by the ordinary courts; impeachment against enumerated high officials; dissolution of a political party; disputes between state agencies, or between state agencies and local governments; and petitions by any person relating to the Constitution.

3. Judicial Proceedings

The South Korean judge is not simply an arbiter between two sides but a seeker of justice who guides the trial, questions the witnesses, and finds facts in the interest of truth. Oral hearings are quite brief since the intermittent system known as the system of piecemeal trials of conducting trials is used. On request, the judge may allow the parties to the action to ask
supplementary questions. The Code of Civil Procedure sets out a number of general principles related to civil and administrative litigation. Among these principles are representation of both parties, oral presentation, bilateral hearing, immediacy, and free admissibility of evidence. In a South Korean court, it is not the universal rule for witnesses to give evidence under oath. The evidence given by the party, whether as witness or by questioning in the court, is considered a secondary means of evidence. An appellate court exercises exclusive jurisdiction with authority over the place of residence where the defendant is situated. As a prerequisite to initiation of administrative litigation before an appellate court, a person deprived of his/her rights by an illegal or unjust action on the part of an administrative agency has to exhaust administrative remedies in accordance with the 1984 Administrative Litigation Law.

In a criminal action, the judge has no function until a charge has been brought by the prosecutor, who has not only the right but the legal obligation to initiate and conduct an investigation into any complaint with a view to bringing a charge. The onus of proving the guilt of an accused person rests on the prosecutor who may request that a case be referred for summary judgment when a minor offence is involved. The accused may request a formal trial within seven days from the receipt of notification of summary judgment, but if he/she fails to do so, or withdraws his/her request, the summary judgment becomes final. Cross-examination has never been prevalent before South Korean criminal courts. Questioning by the court is preferred, and although the judge may permit supplemental questions to be addressed directly by the prosecutor or defense counsel, questioning does not reach the intensity of the Anglo-American style trials. The accused's testimony is not sworn. Relatives of the accused do not give testimony under oath. The evidence of a party in a civil action is generally deemed unacceptable. In resolving legal disputes, judges are willing to dispose themselves to use means of alternative dispute resolution including the traditional approach of mediation.

4. Legal Education

The graduates of the law faculty enter diverse occupations. Only a minor portion of them pursue professional legal careers. To become a member of the legal profession, one must pass a highly competitive annual judicial examination and then complete two years of practical training at the Institute of Judicial Training and Research, an organ of the Supreme Court. Upon completion of a two years’ apprenticeship, one may be invited to become a judge or a Prosecutor, or may join a bar association.

5. Judges

In South Korea, becoming a judge is not a reward for long and successful practice as a member of the bar. It is only the beginning of a career in the civil service. Under the 1987 Constitution, the tenure of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is six years without renewal, whereas Associate justices whose tenure is also six years, are allowed reappointment. Their appointments are subject to the approval of the National Assembly. All other judges have a limited tenure of ten years subject to reappointment.

6. Prosecutors

To become a prosecuting public attorney is also considered entering a civil service career. The 1986 Law of Prosecution Offices prescribes that prosecutors engage in investigation and prosecution of crimes, bring actions in the name of the public, supervise the execution of penalties, and also represent the public interest in civil cases. The highest-ranking prosecutor is the Prosecutor-General, whose official ranking is next to the Minister of Justice. The Prosecutor-General supervises all prosecutors throughout the country under the principle of so-called unity and indivisibility of the prosecution. Prosecutors are assigned to each court on all levels and perform their function independently of the court.
7. Lawyers

The practice of law requires admission to a local bar association in accordance with the 1982 Lawyers Law. The local bar associations are represented by the national bar association. The activity of the bar association generally tends to be limited to protecting the interest of its members and still it is not completely free from the control of the Minister of Justice. A typical Korean law office is managed by a single lawyer or by two or three persons who share offices and practice. However, there is a recent trend to deviate from the traditional solo-practice arrangement and to form law firms, especially by lawyers specializing in the area of international practices.

8. Military Legal Officers

Military legal officers are recruited through a special examination, and successful candidates go through training at the Institute of Judicial Training and Research. Upon completion of ten years of service as a military legal officer, a license is granted to practice law.

9. Auxiliary Legal Personnel

Any member of the bar can be appointed as a notary public by the Minister of Justice, who supervises and assigns notaries public to the district prosecutor's office. Notaries public prepare notarial deeds, which include the issuance of certificates of self-executing obligation and articles of incorporation. Any non-lawyer who meets special qualifications under the existing statutes can become a patent specialist, a tax accountant, a customs agent or an admiralty counsellor. Patent specialists, for instance, represent their clients in the administrative agency and the court in any matter related to Patent. Such paralegal professionals as judicial and administrative scriveners play an important role in judicial administration. Judicial scriveners, for instance, draft legal documents including court papers. Their training ranges from self-education to a post-graduate university degree.

B. North Korea

The administration of justice is the responsibility of two state organs, the courts and the procuracy. People's assessors and lawyers are also participants.

1. Organization of Courts

Courts based on the 1976 Court Organization Law are organized on the three-tier system: people's courts, the provincial court (or municipality directly under the central government) and the Central Court which is the highest court. Two special courts, military courts and the railroad courts are established and their organization and role are stipulated by the Court Organization Law, the Criminal Procedure Code and Code of Civil Procedure. Arbitration chambers of the provincial and the highest courts engage in settling disputes between state enterprises and/or other Socialist organizations.

2. Procuracy

The procuracy is often characterized as the fourth branch of the government and is a watchdog of Socialist legality. It supervises precise and honest compliance with the laws by all central and local state agencies, enterprises, social cooperative organizations and citizens. The Central Procuracy, headed by the Procurator-General whom the S.P.A. appoints for a term of five years, is responsible for the work of all lower-level procurators' offices through a centralized organization. The Central procuracy is responsible for its work only to the S.P.A., the President of the People's Republic, and the C.P.C.
The procuracy is expected to represent citizens in complaints against government agencies and to look after the public interest in civil cases which might have a significant social impact. It supervises or conducts pre-trial investigation in addition to prosecuting criminal cases and makes sure that trials are properly conducted.

3. Judicial Proceedings

Courts render formal legal support for the protection of state and cooperative property and guard citizens' constitutional rights. They also perform an educational role for the organizations and citizens and execute such bureaucratic acts as notarial work.

In the ordinary court proceedings, a collegiate panel composed of one professional judge and two people's assessors conducts hearings in strict accordance with procedural codes. In principle, cases are to be heard in public, and defendants are guaranteed the right to a defence.

Although the courts are organized on the basis of a three-tiered system, parties are only allowed two trials. An exception to this rule is an extraordinary appeal to the Central Court that could be utilized at any stage of the judicial proceedings. However, the use of this appeal requires the approval of the President of the Central Court and the Procurator General. The essential import of the extraordinary appeal concept is that it provides one way for the Central Court to check at least the most obvious deviations of lower courts. The Central Court fulfills its responsibility of supervising the lower courts by issuing guiding directives and by publishing selected cases, decisions and memoranda.

4. The Socialist Guidance Committee for a Law-Abiding Life

According to available sources, the Socialist Guidance Committees for Law-Abiding Life have been established at all national, provincial, municipal and county levels since 1977. The Committee consists of members representing the procuracy, police and people's committee. Based on the Chuch'e ideology, the task of the committees is to create a revolutionary atmosphere of observing the law. The Committees are empowered to supervise the observance of the law by all the government agencies, organizations and citizens. To promote understanding of law for the citizens, there are designated persons in each unit who entertain questions and provide answers on the subject of law.

5. Legal Education

It has been reported that the Faculty of Law, Kim Il Sung University, engages in training of legal professionals. The faculty consists of three departments: legal studies, state management and international legal studies. The study period is four years and six months. Six months are allocated for the practical training. Further graduate legal study is available for the graduates of the law faculty.

6. Judges and People's Assessors

Judges and people's assessors of the Central Court are elected for a five year term or recalled by the S.P.A., but it is responsible to the President of the People's Republic and the Central People's Committee. Judges and people's assessors of the provincial courts and people's courts are elected or recalled by the people's assemblies at the corresponding levels. The term of office for members of provincial courts and the People's Courts is four years. People's assessors enjoy the same rights as judges and participate in deciding questions of fact and law. It has been reported that professionalism, even among judges, is not fostered under the North Korean system, since the court's political judgment is of primary importance. While judges serve full-time during their tenure, people's assessors are supposed to serve only fourteen days per year. If the trial requires additional time, the
people's assessors are to serve continuously and wage earners are paid their regular earnings during their service. Qualifications to be judges and people's assessors require a worker who is eligible to vote; a firm believer of the Chuch'e ideology; and a candidate who is ready to carry out policies of the Korean Labour Party.

7. Procurators

Appointment or removal of procurators is made by the Central Procuracy. Selection of a procurator is based on a candidate's allegiance to the party and on possession of a politically sound mind indoctrinated with the training of revolutionary activities.

8. Lawyers

The 1948 Regulations Concerning Lawyers prescribes the creation of bar associations in P'yŏngyang and each province. They are subject to supervision of the provincial court and of the Central Court. There is the National Central Committee which represents local bar associations. Association activities, salary of association members, and fee payment arrangements are administered by the standing committee of each local association, whose members are elected for a two-year term at the general meeting of the association. Lawyers are expected to know how to protect party policies and also to protect the state interest in lieu of their client's concerns.

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Leisure Activities

Recreation is a fundamental need of all people and for this reason recreation and play are normal expressions inherent in the development of the body, intellect and emotions of humans. Forms of recreation also reveal much about the people of a society and their lifestyles. The development of recreation and forms of play also serve as barometers of a society’s advancement, values and spirit. It is not an exaggeration to state that the leisure activities and games of a society reflect its national consciousness and way of living.

Historical Leisure Activities

In the earliest Korean states the lives of the people revolved around agriculture. Accordingly, the most important elements of their lives can be seen in matters that were concerned with the outcome of the harvest. Therefore, a great deal of agrarian rituals were performed with an aim to ensure a bountiful harvest. The periods when the people had the greatest amount of leisure-time were in the spring before planting their crops, and in the fall after the harvest. During these seasons the people would perform sacrificial rituals to the deities they believed governed the success of their crops. However, these rituals were also times when the people gathered and celebrated with one another. Chinese documents record these events, such as the Sanguo zhi (History of the Three Kingdoms) which describes the Yōnggo Festival in the ancient state of Puyō. This festival, which was held in the first month of the lunar year, was not only a time when sacrificial rites were performed to the gods that governed agriculture, but it was also when the people of Puyō gathered to feast, while enjoying song and dance. The magnitude of this festival can be seen in the fact that all of the people of the state joined in the celebrations, and even those who had been incarcerated were released from their punishment to take part. Other like ceremonies were held in early Korean states including the much'ōn of Eastern Ye and tongmaeng of Koguryō, both of which were held after the harvest. The common features of these ceremonies are that they served both religious and secular functions. From the religious aspect, these ceremonies entreated the gods of agriculture for either an abundant harvest or thanked them for the one they had just reaped. As a secular function, the ceremonies enabled the people of the ancient Korean states to gather and celebrate together. The feasts that accompanied these ceremonies were times for the people to relax as a community and participate in group games that encouraged communal harmony.

By the time of the Three Kingdoms, the leisure activities of the people had become rather more formalised than in earlier times. Activities such as dramatic plays and masked dances became part of the recreation of the people, and these performances were incorporated into the entertainment at the royal palaces. Seasonal customs were still the major force in leisure activities, and recreational activities still had the character of supplication to the spirits that governed agriculture, for abundant harvests. One game that displays the duel character of entertainment for the people and as an incantatory ritual for agrarian purposes, is tug-of-war. Generally speaking, tug-of-war competition took place during major holidays such as Tano, New Year and Ch’usŏk, since it required group participation. In playing tug-of-war, two villages would form East and West teams and join together large straw-plaited ropes, with each team endeavouring to pull the other over a demarcation line. The entertainment value of this folk game is seen in the group effort required to make the ropes and to win the contest, and is a method by which the village could maintain social harmony. The incantatory effect of the game is seen in it being an extension of a fertility rite. The West team would commonly be viewed as the female team, and if the West team was victorious, it portended an abundant harvest. The tug-of-war ritual symbolises the sexual union between a male and a female through the coupling of two ropes and the tugging back and forth. This game was most often performed during the New Year’s festivities, and on a dormant field.
The adoption of Buddhism during the Three Kingdoms created other holidays and as a consequence, occasions for the people to gather and enjoy leisure activities. On Buddha’s birthday during the fourth lunar month, lanterns were put up in every house and temple and yŏndŭng nori (festival of lantern-lighting) was celebrated. This was also an occasion in which the people could gather and enjoy merriment together. However, the inclusion of Buddhist holidays did not supplant the performance of traditional, shamanistic holidays. Holidays such as Tano and Ch’usŏk continued to be observed and, along with New Year, were the major holidays. These leisure days and festivals continued to be chiefly centred around farming rituals.

In Koryŏ, the biggest holiday was the national festival known as the p’algwanhoe, which incorporated many of the traditions of the former Koguryŏ tongmaeng festival. Although this festival underwent many changes during the half millennium in which it was held, it still served as an occasion for the people of the kingdom to gather and participate in many large-scale games. Many of the games in this era were much the same as in former times. There were large-scale group games played by men, such as stone fighting, tug-of-war, and torch fighting, among others. Games played among the womenfolk consisted mostly of group singing and dancing activities that embodied incantatory rites for the village. An example of a women’s game is kanggang sullae in which the women of a village would form a large circle and sing songs while dancing.

With the advent of Chosŏn came a clear demarcation between the games enjoyed by the common people and those that the ruling classes took pleasure in. The games of the commoners continued to reflect their beliefs founded in shamanism and their desires for bountiful harvests. Games such as tug-of-war, ssirŏm (a type of wrestling), mask dance dramas, and other large-scale village games continued to be enjoyed by the commoners. However, the upper echelon did not participate in the group games and instead enjoyed kyŏkkŭ (a type of polo); pitching arrows; ssangnyuk (a type of backgammon); changgi (Chinese chess); and paduk (Korean checkers); all of which came to be games reserved for those in the upper classes. A primary characteristic of Chosŏn was the development of a social hierarchy, and this distinction between the classes was evidenced, even in the types of games they played.

Many traditional leisure activities continued to enjoy popularity until recent times. Games like yut (four-stick game) and hwat’u (flower cards), were played by all people, regardless of age or sex, and they had many different ways of being enjoyed. Children’s games such as chegi ch’agi (shuttlecock kicking); p’aengi ch’igi (top-spinning); and konggi nori (jackstones) have retained their popularity because of the enjoyment they offer and their simplicity.

Characteristics of Traditional Leisure Activities

The games enjoyed in traditional Korea closely reflected the lives of the people. The folk-games were linked closely with people’s work and were passed on to following generations in connection with seasonal customs, ceremonies of passage and sacrificial rituals. These games were not individually created, but were collaborative efforts that evolved over many generations. The discussion of folk games must be linked with seasonal customs, as the two entities cannot be separated. This point can be validated from the fact that the leisure activities associated with a particular seasonal custom disappeared when that custom became extinct.

The leisure activities of traditional Korea can be divided into those enjoyed by children, women and men. Children’s games can be sub-divided between the sexes. Games that boys enjoyed included the militaristic ones such as stone tossing, stick tossing, shuttlecock kicking and others with a military flavour. These games do not require special implements and are acknowledged as games which are performed through the motions of hitting,
kicking and running, which thereby enabled young boys to develop the skills that led them to manhood. The activities that young girls took pleasure in focussed more-or-less on those that involved the development of hand-eye co-ordination, or jumping. Therefore, games such as jacks, jump rope and swinging were common activities among young girls, and these nurtured the girls for womanhood.

The games of adults in traditional times generally carried the dual characteristic of entertainment and of incantatory rites. Women participated in non-competitive activities such as swinging, seesawing, and group games like kanggang sullae. Women's games served to create harmony among the village group and also carried the function of praying for abundant harvests. Adult male games, on the other hand, stressed large-scale violent competitive activities such as stone fighting, torch fighting, wood-metal fighting and team fighting. These required a larger number of participants and also demanded time for preparation. As a consequence, they were only held in conjunction with major seasonal holidays such as Tano or Ch'usok.

Another strong characteristic of traditional leisure activities is the close relationship they share with work. Fundamentally, the concept of leisure activities and work are diametrically opposed. However, folk games served to transfer the functions of play into work, thereby allowing these two concepts to co-exist. An example of the symbiotic relation between work and play can be seen in the performing of nong'ak (farmer's music) while working in the fields. Traditionally, when farmers were to perform a communal task, they would form a ture (a collective labour group) and then proceed to the fields to work. Accompanying the ture would be a contingent that would perform nong'ak while both in the fields and in transit to and from them. The purpose of the nong'ak was to create a festive environment that would encourage hard work, while at the same time lessening the hardship of field labour. Moreover, the motions of dancing along with the nong'ak emulated the movements involved in working in the fields, and in this manner the work was made easier.

Leisure Activities of the Modern Period

The advent of the Japanese colonial period in Korea marked a major change in the activities of the people in many aspects including their leisure-time pursuits. The Japanese Governor-General regulated many types of folk games in Korea, and in particular banned the large-scale fighting and group games since they feared the harmony and nationalistic consciousness of the Koreans that could be aroused through these games. As a result of this Japanese oppression of leisure, by the end of the colonial period many of the traditional games of Koreans approached extinction.

After liberation in 1945, the traditional games and pastimes of Koreans were no longer suppressed, but faced a new threat in the onslaught of Western culture which swept into Korea. The national movement in South Korea towards modernisation led to the games of the past being pushed rudely aside. New activities began to sprout in Korea and in the common mindset of this period, any activity that was Western in origin was automatically given higher status than those with Korean roots. Along with western leisure-time activities came the concept of commercialisation of games and leisure-time activities. There no longer was a connection between leisure activities and the daily rhythm of life such as there had been in former days. Also, there was no deep-seated relationship between many of the new activities and Korean culture. These were fundamental changes in the way leisure-time activities were thought of in Korea.

Some of the popular leisure activities in Korea today include Western sports such as soccer, basketball, baseball, skiing, cycling, and many other modern sports. Other activities, such as mountain climbing, swimming, and fishing are more akin to traditional pastimes of the past age. There are both amateur and professional sports teams in Korea today and sports such as baseball, soccer and basketball draw large followings, both in person and via the
Aside from physical activities, Koreans participate in a wide range of hobbies and interests that form a major part of their leisure-time. Hobbies in South Korea are as diverse as in any country in the world and reflect the characteristics of the Korean people. Music, videos, television and cinema form a major part of the interests of many people, while others enjoy reading novels and magazines. New technologies, such as computers and the Internet have also found a great number of devotees in Korea. Other activities include travel in both Korea and abroad, spending time with classmates or co-workers and taking self-improvement courses at private academies to learn skills such as pottery or a foreign language, or in playing paduk (checkers played by two persons with black and white stones).

The Present State of Sports

Korea has been making steady progress to join the elite sporting nations of the world, competing under the Korea flag for the first time at the London Olympiad in 1948. A mark of significance of South Korea’s approach to becoming an international name in sport was the hosting of the 1988 summer Olympics in Seoul. In this showcase of the world’s premier athletes, the ROK not only hosted the first boycott-free Olympics in twelve years, but also was placed fourth in the overall medal tally. Since the Seoul Olympic Games, South Korea has consistently performed at high levels in international sporting events.

Professional sports in Korea are major attractions for millions of fans feverishly following their favourite teams. In the summer, the most active spectator sport is baseball, as teams from around the country vie for the pennant. In autumn, professional soccer and basketball draw large crowds. Large contingents of fans follow boxing, field and ice hockey, gymnastics, golf and many other sports. In addition to these Western-type sports, traditional sports such as ssirum continue to draw huge spectator support throughout the nation. Another Korean sport that has gained worldwide following is T'ae kwon do, which now has its place in the Olympics program. Moreover, amateur sports are also thriving and have large followings at all levels.

Today, a great number of sports and pastimes are offered countrywide. Skiing, hang gliding and scuba diving require special places, conditions and equipment in order to be performed. Ice skating, yachting and power boating, are a few of the seasonal activities which are enjoyed in Korea. However, regardless of the season, many Koreans find some outdoors activity in which to participate during their leisure-time. In the more temperate months, the mountains host multitudes of hikers and climbers in the areas accessible from the major urban centres, and likewise, the beaches with sunbathers and swimmers. For those who do not enjoy physical activities, there are cultural events to attend, such as art galleries, antique shops and many historical locales to visit.

Bibliography


Libraries (see also under individual library)

Libraries have existed in Korea since ancient times. In the Koguryŏ kingdom, taehak (National Academy primarily attended by aristocrats) and kyŏngdang (schools for the common people) served both as educational institutions and textual repositories. With the unification of the Three Kingdoms, an increased interest in Chinese thought led to a greater need for libraries. Consequently, the Greater Shilla kingdom established Chin’gaksŏng as a
831

During early Koryŏ, marked advancement in printing technology made written material more accessible. Books and texts continued to be collected in royal archives such as Pisosŏng during King Sŏngjong's reign (981-997), and then Mundŏkchŏn, Ch'onggwangjon, Changnyŏngjon and Yŏnyŏngjon during King Sukchong's reign (1095-1105). Ch'ŏngyŏn'gak, Saru, Ch'ŏnjanggak Imch'ŏngak and Munch'ŏpsŏ were established during Yejong's reign (1105-1122) and Ŝŏjkosŏ during Injong's reign (1122-1146). Sukchong's appears to have taken particular interest in his kingdom's book repositories. In 1101, he personally inspected the Ch'onggwangjon and affixed a special seal on works from the collection. Texts were also kept in Buddhist monasteries. For example, copies of the Ch'oj'o taejanggyŏng, the first Koryŏ carving of the Buddhist canon, were stored at forty-four monasteries throughout the kingdom, including the An'guk, Kaeguk and Kukch'ong temples. When the woodblocks for the first edition were lost by fire, a second edition was prepared between 1236 and 1251. Here again, copies were distributed to the principal monasteries. These wooden printing blocks have survived and today are in safe-keeping at Haein Temple.

In early Chosŏn, the royal textual archive, Changsŏgak, was located in the hall known as Chiphyŏnjŏn. Later, a new repository, T'ungyŏnggak, was created inside the hall known as Hongmun'gwăn. During the reign of Chŏngjo (1776-1800), the book repository Kyujanggak was created as part of the king's encouragement of education.

As Korea opened to the West following the 1876 Treaty of Friendship, the nation's library system was gradually redesigned along Western lines. Unlike the traditional royal collections or temple repositories which primarily served as archives for specialist study, the modern libraries aimed to make books available to the general public. Early libraries founded at this time include P'yŏngyang's Taedong Sŏgwan as well as Seoul's Tongji Munyegwan and Ŝŏjk Chongnamso. At this time, high schools and colleges were also active in creating modern libraries. With the Japanese occupation of Korea, the royal book collection was redistributed according to colonial policy. Some of the books were moved to libraries, and in 1930, 136 141 volumes were transferred to Keijō Imperial University in Seoul. Today, these works are kept at Seoul National University.

After liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945, the steady increase in literacy rates necessitated further expansion of the nation's library system.

Although there has been rather rapid expansion of libraries, Korean libraries lag behind their Western counterparts in terms of collection size and general availability of books. Primarily, they serve as large study halls for young students. Yet much is being done to give Korean libraries a more active role in promoting education for the general public. In addition to shelf collections of books and magazines, many libraries are setting up special collections for children and library facilities for the handicapped, as well as running book clubs and arranging public lectures.

Central national library 1
National Assembly library 1
Public libraries 197
College and university libraries 287
High School libraries 1692
Middle school libraries 1875
Elementary school libraries 2980
Special libraries 250 (I assume that this figure includes much that
Blackwell wants broken down).
Life in Corea

*Life in Corea* is a work which examines the prevailing conditions in Korea at the close of the nineteenth century. Its author is W. R. Carles, a British vice-consul. This 317-page book was published in 1888 by Macmillan and Company. Its content is based on the author's eighteen-month stay in Korea, and its scope is limited to his experiences while living and travelling there. Aside from a chapter recounting the *coup d'état* of 1884 (Kapshin Chŏngbyŏn), the book does not elaborate on the way in which the Korean government was structured and operated at that time, and Korean social systems are also excluded. It does, however, give a valuable insight into the customs of the common people.
Literature

Introduction

Korean literature begins with old stories, songs, myths, legends, and history - a great variety of material that has survived from roughly the sixth c., in the Three Kingdoms period. Though the written records commence much later, in the twelfth and thirteenth c. with the History of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk sagi) and the Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk yusa) these later records include materials from earlier times that have been lost or destroyed in the centuries since, or materials that were transmitted through performance traditions.

Songs and other materials from the Koryŏ period, roughly the tenth to the fourteenth centuries, include rather earthy or bawdy examples; but again because the Korean vernacular materials were actually written down considerably later, after the promulgation of the Korean alphabet in the mid-fifteenth c., and most of them even later than that, in the various eighteenth-c. music anthologies, problems of ascription and dating abound. And matters are further complicated by the suspicion that it was precisely the more earthy Koryŏ songs that were selected by later generations of government officers to demonstrate the depravity of the earlier era. The Koryŏ period also witnessed more emphatically in terms of an actual written record a rapid increase in the composition of literary works in Classical Chinese, the language for authoritative, formal discourse - like Latin in the comparable period in Europe.

Soon after the founding of the new Chosŏn dynasty in the late fourteenth c., the Korean phonemic alphabet in use today was invented and promulgated by King Sejong. Although the king's ambitious goal of broad and general use of the alphabet was not realized until the early twentieth c. - in large part because of the solid resistance to the idea put up by the scholar-bureaucrat classes who recognized a threat to their Chinese-learning-based ascendancy - the Korean alphabet nevertheless did have broad and deep impact on the history of Korean literature. Korean prose, including journals and diaries, as well as the two principal vernacular verse forms, the shijo and the kasa, came to represent an alternative to Chinese-language written forms; and, especially for women and others barred customarily from access to Chinese literary training, the vernacular literary forms came to have a political as well as literary dimension.

Officials who, for factional reasons, had been banished from the government, composed shijo and kasa which voiced their complaints; members of the middle level of the official class who, for one reason or another found their careers blocked, might express their frustrations in a bit of allegorical verse, or at more length in a political protest tale such as The Tale of Hong Kiltong, a story about an accomplished male whose status as the son of a concubine made advancement impossible. Women, too, in Korean-language journals as well as such established literary verse forms as the kasa and shijo, expressed the difficulties of their lives in traditional society. The marginalized elements of traditional society employed the Korean language in effect to recover the narrative control of their histories.

Twentieth c. Korean literature has been and continues to be extremely politicized, as it was written on one side or the other of four major political issues: the late nineteenth c. modernization movement, and its questions of collaboration with foreign powers or complete self reliance; the Japanese colonial occupation of Korea from 1910 to 1945, which raised and raises the issue of collaboration; the post-1945 division of Korea into northern and southern ideological regimes; and since the end of the Korean War in 1953, in South Korea the series of dictatorships, both civilian under Syngman Rhee, and military or quasi-military under Generals - later, Presidents - Park Chung Hee, Chun Doo Hwan, and Roh Tae-woo. In North Korea until his death in the summer of 1994, Kim Il Sung had
continued to hold sway over a highly centralized, authoritarian Communist state which permitted the publication only of works dealing in prescribed ways with officially sanctioned subjects.

This politicization of its literature has created in Korea a shifting cast of heroic and villainous characters, not just on the page, but in the ranks of the authors who wrote on one perceived side or the other of such political positions. The novelist Yi Kwangsu, to cite just one prominent example, was arrested, put on trial, and threatened with jail after liberation for his pro-Japanese writings during the period of the occupation. The government which did this to him was headed by Syngman Rhee, who had spent the entire thirty-five years of the occupation in Hawaii, and had been brought back to Korea and installed as the head of the (southern) Republic by the American Army.

Characteristics of Korean Literature

Much as one might describe a new terrain as rocky and hilly, or flat and grass-covered, there are several characteristics of Korean literature that can be described for the reader. While the reader may then experience the satisfaction of recognizing the predicted features of the literary terrain, the process inherently is suspect in that one may see what one looks for, and what one looks for may be to a lesser or greater degree determined by various other considerations. For example, if it is averred that Korean literature displays a relish for the present, for the here and now, an enjoyment of the senses, and an appreciation of humour in many of its manifestations, one has stated something which is demonstrably true and also seems characteristic of Korean culture more generally. While such a formulation suggests at least an indirect relationship between culture and literary expression, at the same time it may provoke the suspicion that 'lively' or 'earthy' are readings of Korean culture constructed from an outside, economically privileged position as between Korea and the West. The colonialist rhetoric of nineteenth c. British discourse on India finds its counterpart in the late nineteenth and twentieth century Japanese discourse specifically intended to denigrate Korean culture vis-à-vis the Japanese modernization project.

Seizing more directly upon the issue of Korea as occupying a subaltern position, it can be noted that Korean literature through the end of the nineteenth c. was engaged in a process of negotiation with Chinese systems of legitimacy and authority. If written in Chinese, Korean literature negotiated its legitimacy in a number of ways: by invoking Chinese reign years, for example, or Chinese place names; or in a form of literary tribute journey, when Korean scholars travelled to China to study, circulate their works, and hope for Chinese recognition and legitimation. When written in the Korean language, Korean literature negotiated either implicitly or explicitly its removal from the Chinese linguistic and cultural system. Such works as the p’ansori narrative 'Tale of Ch’unhyang' make the relationship between the Chinese and Korean vernacular strands in Korean culture the main engine of the plot, as the heroine’s fate is to be caught between the two worlds, owing to her situation as the daughter of a kisaeng woman - the ferociously egalitarian, Mother Korea side of her nature - and a member of the yangban official class which would subject her to its hierarchical domination in the form of the unwanted sexual advances by the provincial governor.

The performance mode of transmission of Korean literature, especially up until the twentieth c. when Korean literature underwent a shift from its oral roots to a consumer-oriented, printed literary mode of production, is an intrinsic feature that is beginning to draw more scholarly attention. The performance mode of transmission shaped certain genres of Korean literature quite directly. The shijo verse form was sung to a standard melody; the kasa was recited; the p’ansori was both sung and spoken; traditional tales were retold; and Chinese texts were memorized and recited to mnemonic patterns that even today can be heard when members of the older generations read the newspapers. A characteristic element in the history of twentieth c. literature has been the exploration of
ways in which to become free of the patterns of performance, as for example in the verse innovations of Sowŏl Kim Chŏngshik in the 1920s, or the prose narrative experiments of Yi Kwangsu starting with his 'Heartless' published in 1917. At the same time, Korean writers have sought to recover the oral tradition in their work, on their own terms. The short story and novel writer Ch'ae Manshik made brilliant use of the p'ansori narrative style and voice in his works from the 1930s and 1940s, just as the poet Kim Chiha has done more recently in his political satires from the 1970s.

Currently the concept of han has drawn the attention of many of those who are studying Korean literature. The term is variously described as a sad or bitter resentment, a grudge, or regret, and the recurrent tone and subject of sadness and regret that runs through Korean literature from early times to the present is han. This sad, regretful, or resentful tone is said to embody and express the feelings of the Korean people toward the harried conditions in which they have lived - subject to foreign invasions and war, ancient and modern; to oppressive foreign influence and pressure, ancient and modern; and to recurrently oppressive government, historical and modern.

Korean literature has been and continues to be a contested zone. The Chinese side of it was monolithically male, the Korean vernacular side slightly less so. With women's issues currently attracting more attention, with the great changes that are occurring throughout Korean society at the present time, suddenly hundreds of examples of women's writings - personal diaries and court journals, and kasa, most notably - are being discovered, or rediscovered, and studied. The concept of popular culture, or more exactly, of the culture of the non-elites, became a matter of great interest in the 1970s. The study of Korea's past history began to look for more material about the life of the common people, rather than just the governing class. Minjung, the people, became a prefix to many of the movements of the 1970s: minjung religion, literature, history all fed into the stream of broadening democratization, which in turn was propelled at least in part by the growth in the later 1970s - when the per capita income level of South Korea overtook and passed that of the North - and increasingly, in the 1980s, of a consumer economy. Poems and stories about the world of work in the late 1970s were replaced by poems and stories from the world of work in the 1980s - notably the book of poems Dawn of Labour by Pak Nohae. Tremendous energy, challenging diversity of positions and views, and seriously contested struggles are characteristic of Korean literature through all of its span, and in the South, since 1945. The spectrum seems much narrower under the state ideology of North Korea, but much less is known at the present time.

The six articles that follow are intended to provide an introduction to Korean literature: oral literature, classical poetry and prose, modern poetry and prose, and Korean literature written in Chinese. The essays on classical and modern poetry have sought to describe the various genres through relatively brief descriptions of the forms, and then provide in selected translations and interpretive notes a sense of how the genres were used, who the representative authors were, and what are some of the interpretive issues in the study of these genres. The essays in classical and modern prose, oral literature, and literature in Chinese, in contrast, have sought to present a more narrative introduction to their subjects, with names, dates, selected titles and brief illustrative passages providing an overall map of the subject. In part this difference of approach is a reflection of the different materials: specific verse forms are more readily presented through description and representative texts, while prose invites a more discursive presentation. Such, at any rate, is the rationale which the authors have come to for their individual approaches to the task of presenting Korean literature in a few pages that still do some justice to its range and diversity.

(Nota bene: all translations, unless otherwise noted, are the work of the authors.)

David R. McCann
Composition in Classical Chinese

Koreans have written Chinese longer than there has been a Korea and Chinese was the written standard in Korea until the end of the nineteenth c. For close to two thousand years almost every aristocratic Korean male, as part of his normal schooling, studied and memorized exemplary specimens of Chinese prose and poetry and was later judged by his fellows on his ability to compose in such forms, himself. As the modern poet and translator of Chinese poetry by Koreans, Kim Jonggil has said, "Most scholars were poets and most poets were scholars." For these reasons the literary output of Koreans in Chinese until the end of the nineteenth c. far outweighed the volume of their work written in Korean.

We may easily surmise that some portion of the Korean peoples on the peninsula had acquired the use of Chinese during the time of the Four Han Commanderies (108 BCE - 313). In Yonggang-gun, North P'yŏngan Province, there remains a very old stone monument that honours the mountain spirit and offers sacrifice. It goes on to ask for gentle weather, successful farming, and freedom from thieves. A few initial characters of the inscription give the history of the monument and the words of prayer are grouped into four-character phrases. It is a fair semblance of established form for composition in Chinese. This monument is generally thought to have been erected in the year 85 CE. After Koguryŏ (37 BCE-668) drove the Han colonies out of the north, users of Chinese were able to penetrate well into the interior of the country and later, as a secondary effect, their influence reached across national borders to the southern states of Paekche (18 BCE-660) and Shilla (57BCE-935).

The ruling class that built the Three Kingdoms was a warrior aristocracy. They rode horses, shot arrows, and demonstrated superior power as they waged wars of conquest using iron weapons. But they became aware of the need for writing as they consolidated their control and developed a ruling system. Early writing in Chinese emerged as men knowledgeable in Chinese were selected and assigned to non-military tasks but their functions were new yet limited in many respects. Chinese writing was used in technical and practical applications, rather than the expression of ideology or the creation of literature.

As the ancient period of Korean literature came to an end, works of literature written in classical Chinese became the most important means of ideological expression and replaced nation-founding oral narrative poetry. The acts of accepting both a world religion - Buddhism - and the common literary language of an entire civilization - classical Chinese - moved Korea out of the ancient and into the medieval period, making of her - along with other peoples - a civilized country.

Greater Shilla Period (668-935)

Soon after the Three Kingdoms were unified by 668, having arrived at the stage where they had to foster the growth of scholar-officials who could apply Confucian learning to practical administration, Shilla's leaders set up a National Confucian College, which promoted the development of literature in classical Chinese. With the leadership of scholar-officials like the great Sŏl Ch'ŏng (ca. 660-730), the National Confucian College gave instruction in the Confucian classics, with a course of instruction designed to develop an understanding of the underlying principles of the Confucian canon and Chinese composition.

At the same time, other Korean students were going to the source, China, for a classical education. Ch'oe Ch'i'wŏn (857-951?) is representative of those who went to Tang China, passed the government service examination for foreigners, and earned literary fame in China before returning to their Shilla homeland. Ch'oe Ch'i'wŏn, from childhood, was
quick and sagacious and had a love of learning. His father, upon sending him to China at the age of twelve, told him, "If you cannot pass the government examinations there after ten years study, you are not my son." Ch'oe Ch'i-won passed the examinations in the allotted time and embarked on an official career in China and made a name for himself through his compositions. It is said that his skill at embellishment in the parallel prose compositional style would move the reader to awe. The precedent set by Ch'oe Ch'i-won's accomplishments inspired emulation by later generations.

For a while, Ch'oe Ch'i-won did realize his most cherished desire of making a name for himself through writing. Though one might have expected him to find a secure position as a man of letters in Tang China, that was not to be. In works he left to posterity, Ch'oe Ch'i-won, himself, revealed clearly that an impediment faced even the most talented, in that they could never become as Chinese as the Chinese, in spite of their best efforts. Only one who had lived in Chinese society could actually appreciate their stubborn exclusivity. We find that point expressed in Ch'oe Ch'i-won's 'An Expression of My Feelings to the Minister of War'.

Who, in his homeland,
    has pity for the foreigner?
Where is the crossing, I ask,
    the crossing for me to take?
From the start I sought a livelihood
    and never thought of profit;
It was only to honour my father
    and not to benefit myself.

The grief of separation on the traveller's road
    is the sound of rain upon a river;
The dream of returning to his homeland
    is a spring too far away.
I crossed the waters and chanced to meet
    with waves of benevolence and yet
If only I could wash ten years of dust
    from the worldly chinstrap of my hat.

State of Parhae (698-926)

Shilla's unification of the Three Kingdoms actually left much of the northern territory in the hands of another power, a state called Parhae that extended as far north as the Songhua (Sungari) River in Manchuria. Eleven works by Parhae poets have been preserved in Japan and, with most being poems composed when their authors were visiting Japan, they are the fragmental products of happenstance. But they are, nevertheless, of uncontested value.

Among Parhae poets whose works and names are known to us one is Yang T'aesa. Though a military man, Yang T'aesa was skilled at writing poetry. There remain two poems by him, composed in 759 while assigned to Japan with the rank of vice-envoy. One of them is called 'Sound of Fulling Clothes Heard at Night', a reference to the custom of smoothing out - fulling - starched clothing by beating it with rounded mallets on a block of stone. In all, the poem consists of twenty-four seven-character lines, of which the first eight lines follow.

The moon shines in frosty heavens
    and the Milky Way is bright;
In the traveller's homeward thoughts
    lives a special kind of heart.
Weary sitting long at night,
when anxiety begins to fade;
Suddenly I hear the sound of
a neighbour woman fulling clothes.

The sound arrives in fits and starts
as it follows on the wind;
The night grows deep and stars incline
while it never stops for rest.
Ever since I left my homeland
I haven't heard it once;
And now I hear in a foreign land
a sound so much like home.

It would appear that this was written one night not long before Yang T'aesa was to complete his assignment and return home. Perhaps not anticipating the presence of others nearby, he is lost in lonesome heartache as he gazes at the sky beyond his window. Suddenly, the sound of fulling reaches his ears. But fulling is not a Japanese custom. "The sound (of fulling) arrives in fits and starts as it follows on the wind," the poet sings, as he employs both rhythm and imagination. In the section following the one quoted above, the poet lets his imagination conjure up the appearance of the woman, her tender body glowing with sweet perspiration as she does her heavy work.

Koryó Period (918-1392)

Chinese learning came into its own during the Koryó period when the Korean bearers of Chinese culture participated at the highest levels of government, after having been denied such access by the warrior-royalty of Shilla. Now the civil service examination system - the only route to an official career - was fully utilized to staff all levels of administration and was theoretically open to all freeborn men. Since the examinations stressed the classics of Chinese literature and Confucianism, aspirants were motivated to study such subjects; Chinese learning, hence, flourished.

Large works of fiction in Chinese did not appear in Korea until well into the Chosó period, following, of course, their late appearance in China, itself. Therefore, the major genres of Chinese composition in Koryó times included history, poetry, criticism, essays, anecdotes, and biography. In addition to two histories of the Three Kingdoms period and private collections of miscellanea and belles-lettres, a major source of Chinese composition during the Koryó is the Anthology of Korean Writing (Tongmun_s6n; 1478), a collection in 133 volumes in 45 books (and later twice enlarged) of work from Shilla, Koryó, and early Chosó.

Let us look at two writers of the early twelfth c., a poet and a historian, whose world views represent a fundamental tension of the Koryó period: a confrontation between the nativist 'P'yŏngyang faction' who aligned themselves with the legacy of Koguryó, and the China-oriented 'Kaesŏng faction', who were associated with the tradition of Shilla. In the poet Chŏng Chisang (?-1135) and historian Kim Pushik (1074-1151), we have figures who represent the two sides.

More than anything else, the theme of separation is most heavily emphasized in the songs of Chŏng Chisang that give voice to the sensibilities of the P'yŏngyang people, for whom separation was a salient factor of P'yŏngyang life. His 'Parting from Another' (Songin), a memorable quatrain of seven-character lines, sings of such separation.

The rain has passed and grass is lush along the river bank;
I sent you off at Namp'o, choking on a joyless song.
When could Taedong’s waters ever be exhausted?
Tears of separation year by year are adding to its azure flow.

While Ch’ong Chisang, on the one hand, demonstrated his fluency in poignant and beautiful poetic language, Kim Pushik, on the other hand, expressed his aristocratic outlook in the structure and content of his History of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk sagi, 1145). While giving greater weight to the Confucian studies and classical Chinese writing that had been established in Shilla than to the independent spirit of the Koguryo nation, Kim Pushik boasted of the cultural level of the hereditary aristocracy of which he, himself, was an exponent.

The most notable section of the History of the Three Kingdoms, from the literary point of view, is its collection of biographies. It had been customary for histories to include biographies ever since the prototypal Historical Records (Shi ji) of China’s Former Han dynasty. Kim Pushik chose to follow the Chinese model, which had already established the precedent of presenting a wide variety of human types in the biographies.

Another writer with a critical point of view was Yi Kyubo (1168-1241), whose many works help to define the literature of Koryo. Thought by some to have been Koryo’s greatest man of learning, he is equally well known for both his poetry and his prose. His anthology, Collected Works of Korean Minister Yi (Tongguk Yi Sangguk chip), totals fifty-three volumes in fourteen books and is not only a treasure of literature but also valuable for the study of Korean history.

As an essayist, he wrote numerous brief but thought-provoking pieces that commented on both the world of men and the world of thought. A typical example, ‘Of Boats and Bribes’ (Churoe sŏl), combines humour and pithy comment on human affairs.

I was crossing over a certain river toward the south and there happened to be some people crossing in a boat beside ours. The size of the two boats was the same, the number of boatmen was the same, and even the number of people and horses on board was very similar. Then, when I looked again after a while, the other boat - speeding as though in flight - had already reached the other bank. But, contrarily, the boat on which I rode hung back and did not make headway.

When I asked the reason for this, someone in the boat answered me, saying, "That’s because, in the other boat, they plied the boatmen with wine and so the boatmen rowed with all their might", he said.

I could not help but feel chagrined and sighed to myself,

"Ah, if speed and placement of this little boat depend upon the presence or absence of a bribe, then what of the competition for official appointment? When I think how little money I have to my name, it seems understandable why I have thus far been unable to land even a single low-level post! " I said.

I record this with a mind to future reference.

Yi Kyubo is also well known for his lengthy work of narrative poetry, the ‘Epic of King Tongmyŏng. (Tongmyŏng-wang p’yŏn), which retells the myth of Chumong, who had become King Tongmyŏng, founder of Koguryo. Particularly noteworthy are his opening comments, which assert the independent dignity of the Korean tradition.

The mysterious tales of King Tongmyŏng are so well known that even ignorant men and simple women can tell them. When I first heard them I laughingly remarked that the sage Confucius did not speak of prodigies, feats of strength, disorders, or spirits, and since the
stories of King Tongmyông were obviously exaggerated fantasies, they ought not to be repeated... Later on, in the fourth moon of 1193 I obtained a copy of the old Samguk-sa and saw that the account of King Tongmyông given there included more marvels even than the oral tradition. I still could not believe what I thought were false and illusory legends; but after mulling them over several times, I came round to thinking that they were not illusory, but holy; not false, but spiritual; and that if our national history was to be written properly, they could not be ignored. (Translation by Richard Rutt)

Two notable Buddhist monks of the thirteenth c. made lasting contributions to the development of Korean literature. Iryôn (1206-1289) compiled Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk yusa; ca. 1285) and Ch'ungji (1226-1292) was a major contributor of poetry in Chinese on a wide range for topics from Sôn (Zen) Buddhism to the sufferings of the peasantry.

While Kim Pushik's History of the Three Kingdoms represents the official view of the Koryô court on the history of Shilla, Koguryô, and Paekche, Iryôn's Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms is an unofficial compilation that takes a freer view. Iryôn covers a longer stretch of history than did Kim Pushik - sometimes extending even into the the Koryô period - and incorporates many diverse materials, including legends, folk tales, nation-founding myths, foundation tales of Buddhist temples, and the miracles of noted monks. Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms, even from its opening, subtly criticizes the History of the Three Kingdoms. Iryôn questions Confucian rationalism by asking how one can think it reasonable for ancient nation-founding culture heroes of China to receive mysterious tokens and regalia and accomplish great undertakings but, at the same time, reject as tales of 'mysteries, prodigies, perversities, and demons' the colourful founding mythology of the Korean people, as did Kim Pushik.

The elimination of historical references to Buddhism in the History of the Three Kingdoms was another a great dissatisfaction for him. Whereas the cultural stream in which the Koryô people took pride began in ancient myth and extended through Buddhism, Iryôn undertook his own compilation with the attitude that little that is Korean can be left when these two are discarded.

The Buddhist monk Ch'ungji stands apart for his social awareness and is unlike other Buddhist Sôn poets of the Koryô period, who left no significant social commentary. This is expressed in his stinging indictments of the Koryô and Mongol (Yuan) governments for their horrific misuse of the Koryô peasantry in their frantic campaigns to prepare men and matériel for the two abortive invasions of Japan, attempted in 1274 and 1281, while Koryô was under Mongol domination.

Witnessing the impact of these events on the lives of the peasantry, Ch'ungji stepped forward to give voice to his conscience, while other men of letters kept their agony to themselves. The result was a long poem in which he described the wretched scene in 1280 of dragooned corvée labour -worse than 1274 by 'one hundred fold' - as Yfiuan officials came parading down to the south to supervise war preparations. As this heavy labour stretched on for three long years, even farmers were pressed into service as boatmen and life was made unliveable for those whose homes were by the coast. And, while survivors were being rounded up as soldiers to be sent off in the expedition, Ch'ungji described the dreadful sight he saw. Nonetheless, political exigencies obliged him to append a final stanza in praise in the Yuan Emperor.

'The Wretched Sight of Yongnam in Twenty-four Verses - Written in 1280 During the Construction of Warships for the Subjugation of the East'

At the wretched sight of Yongnam,
I try to speak but tears precede my words.
In southern provinces they make matériel,
And at three mountain sites, the ships of war.
Corvées of war increase one hundred fold,
And heavy labour stretches three long years.

Levies and demands press on them like comets,
And thunderous commands are sent to them.
Mongol envoys continue visits without pause,
And generals are streaming from the capital.
With all the able-bodied ganged and tied,
Does any back escape the whip?

While visitors are being welcomed as usual,
Movement of matériel continues day and night.
Neither ox nor horse with sound back left;
And the people, when will their shoulders ever rest?
At icy dawn they go to pick the mountain arrowroot
And, treading the moon, return with reeds they’ve cut.

Deckhands are levied from the furrows they once tilled,
And helmsmen are enlisted in the coastal towns.
They pick up conscripts and put them into armour,
Take young braves as porters for their spears.
They only press them harder all the time;
How could they forgive a momentary delay?

Their wives fall to the ground in tears
And parents lift their wails to Heaven.
Having seen the bounds of this world and the next,
How can they hope to keep life and breath intact?
Left behind are just the elders and the children,
Who struggle on but still are vexed and worried.

In every county, half the houses are abandoned;
In every village, all the fields lie still.
Whose house is there that isn't desolate?
What place is there that isn't cursed?
The taxes of the yamens are not easy to avoid
And how can the military draft be lessened?

Sickness and injury only worsen by the day,
How will they recover from exhaustion and disease?
Every task they touch can only be endured with wailing
And as for life itself - how truly pitiful it is!
Even if they know the harshness of survival,
How can they appeal? There is no place to remonstrate.

The emperor’s virtue o'erspreads them like blue heaven
And imperial radiance o'erhangs them like white sun.
If the untaught people can only wait a little while,
The imperial benevolence will surely be proclaimed.
Then go look within the provinces of the south:
In every house they sleep on pillows of peaceful rule.
Yi Chehyŏn (1287-1367) is representative of a comparatively productive generation that emerged in Koryŏ's last century. Yi Chehyŏn's writings are too voluminous to be described in simple terms but, taken as a whole, they show two orientations - either toward his experiences in Yuan China or toward his home country of Koryŏ. When King Ch'ungson went to Yuan to build a library called the 'Hall of Ten Thousand Volumes' in the capital city of Yanjing, Yi Chehyŏn accompanied him and associated on an equal footing with leading Yuan scholars. He took pride in his ability to write polished and metrically correct poems in Chinese styles that were thought impossible for non-Chinese to master. Nevertheless, his heart was always with Koryŏ and he was greatly concerned with the changing political situation in his homeland. From time to time in his travels he would reveal in his poetry his keen yearning to get back to Koryŏ.

Floating around in this tiny boat, I ask
what am I to do about my heart?
Who said that those within the Four Seas
could all be brothers?
Once I hear the cry of wild geese,
I yearn for news from afar;
Whenever I see the homing birds,
I lament my toilsome life.

A distressing autumn rain envelopes
the trees at Qingshen, and
In the falling sun clouds cut across
the Baidi Fortress.
I have learned too well that water-shield soup
is far better than goat's milk gruel;
There is no need for me to ask Jun Ping
whether I shall stay or go!

In this poem called 'Thoughts of Returning' (Sagwi), Yi Chehyŏn reveals his desire to return to Koryŏ. He travels up the Yangtze River on a boat that passes the village of Qingshen and arrives in the vicinity of Baidi Fortress, where the last emperor of Shu Han died, a broken man, unable to realize his dream of unifying China. Tormented by thoughts of the ordeals of his own king back home in Koryŏ Yi Chehyŏn cannot pass off this scene lightly. The 'distressing autumn rain' and 'falling sun' serve basically to reflect the poet's sad heart. He far prefers the humble soup made back home from a pond weed called 'water-shield' to the goat's milk gruel then popular in Mongolized Yuan and he knows that he has no need to ask a fortune-teller like the famous Jun Ping whether he would remain longer in Yuan or go home to Koryŏ.

Next came the generation that included Yi Saek (1328-1396). Yi Saek furthered the line of thought adopted by his teacher, Yi Chehyŏn, and emerged as the teacher to another generation. Not only did his own scholastic and creative writing represent a considerable level of achievement, but he trained many disciples, who were able to establish a new spirit in thought and literature and thus exert a profound influence on later Koreans.

He passed the government examination, became a Literary Licentiate at the age of fourteen, and was then accepted at Sŏnggyungwan, the national Confucian Academy. Later, he went to China, where he passed the Chinese government examination and received official appointment. In his forties, he returned to Korea and participated in the government of Koryŏ, at the same time promoting the Neo-Confucian philosophy which he had studied while in China. Later critics believed that Neo-Confucianism became strongly established in Koryŏ on the strength of Yi Saek's teaching.

Among Yi Saek's poems are many that sing of popular customs, such as 'Visiting an
Exorcism' (Kunahaeng) and 'A Rockfight on Tano Day' (Tano sŏkchŏn); and still others make use of popular adages for their materials. In a number of single-stanza poems - like 'Silk-raising Woman' (Chambu), 'Woodcutters' (Ch'odong), 'Farmer' (Nongbu), and 'Fisherman' (sŏbu) - Yi Saek depicts in concrete terms the hard life of the labouring masses.

Chosŏn Period Literature

The shift in government policy away from support of Buddhism and toward Neo-Confucianism was deeply related to the development of Korean literature written in Chinese. The examination system became the only route to official appointment and aristocrats were encouraged to devote themselves to study in preparation for the examinations. The content of the examinations obliged Confucian students to master the Four Books and Five Classics for the Classics Licentiate Examination and such Chinese literary forms as shi poetry, rhyme prose (tı), documentary prose (biao), and the problem essay (ce) for the Literary Licentiate Examination. These requirements generated a nation-wide infrastructure of preparatory schools ranked in several levels. Following upon this beginning, literature in Chinese in all genres flourished in Korea for the five hundred years of the Chosŏn period and can be organized into the three periods of early (1392-1506), middle (1506-1720), and late (1720-1910).

1. Early Period (1392-1506)

Even though this was a transitional period in the institutional life of the country, literature in Chinese continued to develop unabated with the protection and encouragement of the government. Most representative of literary people during the early period of Chosŏn were Chŏng Tojŏn (13377-1398), Kwŏn Kun (1352-1409), and Sŏ Kŏjong (1420-1488). The fervently anti-Buddhist Chŏng Tojŏn was a disciple of the great Neo-Confucian Koryŏ scholar, Yi Saek. Although he passed the civil service examinations under the Koryŏ government, he became a close supporter of Yi Songgye, the founder of Chosŏn, for which he was favoured and well rewarded as a 'Dynastic Foundation Merit Subject'. Nevertheless, he was later executed in the course of a power struggle that brought Taejong, the third king, to the throne. Not only was he talented at letters and a leader in the promotion of Neo-Confucian thought, but he also compiled the Administrative Code of Chosŏn (Chosŏn kyŏnggu: chŏn) and contributed to the compilation of the Six Codes of Governance (Kyŏngje yukchŏn). Thus, in addition to being a man of literature, this multi-talented person was also a scholar, statesman, and philosopher.

Kwŏn Kun was a disciple of the politically powerful late Koryŏ statesman, Chŏng Mongju. He passed the examinations at the age of eighteen in the last years of Koryŏ and accepted official appointment but, on the eve of Koryŏ's collapse, forsook his post and retired to the countryside. Later, at the invitation of Chosŏn founder Yi Sŏnggye, he emerged to serve in a number of posts ending up with the senior rank of Academician. Looking back from his late sixteenth-c. vantage-point, the noted scholar and writer Hŏ Kyun (1569-1618) remarked that the literary accomplishments of Chŏng Tojŏn and Kwŏn Kun were so high that they set long-term standards of value.

Sŏ Kŏjong, who held the tenured rank of Academician for twenty-six years, was not only a man of great erudition but was also an exemplar in Chinese composition - so much that men of letters continued to regard him as a model even until the waning years of the dynasty. Among his many works two shining monuments are Remarks on Poetry by Koreans (Tongin shihwa, 1474) and the massive Anthology of Korean Literature (Tongmun sŏn).

The field of literary criticism in this early period was defined by Sŏ Kŏjong's Remarks on Poetry by Koreans. In addition to the anecdotes surrounding the composition of notable poetry, Sŏ Kŏjong's work also contains commentaries on specific works of past poets that
constitute full-blown literary criticism. And his *Anthology of Korean Literature*, as a collection of the best writing from Shilla to early Chosŏn, is esteemed as a critical consolidation of Chinese literature by Koreans through early Chosŏn.

Prose of this period showed much development over that of previous times. Many works appeared with a considerable range of content including remarks on poetry (shihwa), amusing anecdotes (sohwa), fiction (sosŏl), and authentic precedents (chŏn’go). However, of all the works composed in this era, the most noteworthy would be *New Tales from Mount Kŭmŏ* (Kŭmŏ shinhwā) by Kim Shisūp (1435-1493). The appearance of Kim Shisūp’s *New Tales* is considered an epochal event because the work broke away from the limitations of legend and tale and encroached upon the territory of fiction.

2. Middle Period (1506-1720)

Many regard the middle of the Chosŏn period as the golden age of Chinese literature in Korea. In particular, the reign of King Sŏnjo (r. 1567-1608) was noted for the number of literary people who poured forth, even in the face of the devastating invasions of 1592 and 1597 by the Japanese warlord Hideyoshi. With a series of monarchs who supported literature as part of an official policy that favoured Confucianism, Chinese learning and literature continued to develop in spite of the unfortunate series of purges that marred the political and cultural scene.

Literary activity during the middle period differed from the early period in several respects. The literary composition of verse and prose became separated from Confucian studies, people began to specialize in either prose or poetry, and the favoured Chinese influence shifted from Song dynasty poetry to that of the Tang dynasty. That this was a period when writers began to specialize in prose or poetry is not to say that earlier men of letters were uniformly proficient at both. But, since most did not emphasize one over the other, the better writers were more likely to be equally skilled at both prose and poetry. Nevertheless, among the most prominent writers of the day, Ch'a Ch'ŏllo (1556-1615) and Kwŏn P'il (1569-1612), were famous for their poetry and Ch'oe Ip (1539-1612) was better known for his prose than his poetry.

Ch'oe Ip was a leading man of letters in his day. He passed first in the examinations at the age of twenty. Because he would never release a composition until he had rewritten the manuscript many times, people would rush to memorize his words when they did appear. Although Ch'oe Ip was also skilled at poetry, the verdict of later critics is that he was, first and foremost, a master of prose.

Ch'a Ch'ŏllo had a formidable talent that earned him critical praise. He once boasted that, if he papered the Great Wall of China and started to write a poem, he would run out of wall before he did poetry. He also claimed that once, on a visit to Japan, he wrote four or five thousand poems in the space of a single day.

Kwŏn P'il never gained rank. By nature unrestrained, he did not fawn before the powerful but satirized the political scene of his day. For this behaviour he was sent into exile, where he died. For him, poetry was not a means of advancement, nor was it a way to enjoy leisure hours: it was a demanding search for the truth in life. He said, "Beauty is not the only thing of value in poetry; in order to create poetry one must understand both basic philosophical principles and the nature of humankind."

Chinese literature in Korea was under the influence of Chinese literature, itself. During late Koryŏ and early Chosŏn the dominant influence came from Song dynasty poetry but this middle period of Chosŏn saw changes in preferences. After two hundred years of modeling their poetry on Su Shí (1063-1101) and his disciple Huang Tianjian (1045-1105) of the Song, a swing toward the Tang dynasty was led by the efforts of poets like Paek
Kwanghun (1537-1582), Ch’oe Kyŏngch’ang (1539-1583), and Yi Tal (1539-1612), who became known as the Three Tang Poets of Korea (samdang p’a shiin). The most famous of the Three Tang Poets was Yi Tal. He was a superior poet but, because of his illegitimate birth, he could not rise in the world and, therefore, spent his life a wanderer. Nevertheless, his poetry earned wide praise.

In addition to men of letters known for their prose and poetry, there were also many talented writers among those men who devoted their lives to the worlds of government and scholarship. Four very prominent representatives, known collectively as the Four Great Masters (sadaega), are Yi Chŏnggu (1564-1635), Shin Hŭm (1566-1628), Yi Shik (1584-1647), and Chang Yu (1587-1638).

Yi Chŏnggu (1564-1635) was active throughout and after the period of the Hideyoshi invasions of the 1590s and, taking it upon himself to demonstrate the worth of the pure and correct Chinese composition of the ruling elite, was revered as the eldest of a group known as the Four Masters of Chinese Prose. During the Hideyoshi invasions, when it was mistakenly thought in Ming China that the Koreans had brought the invasions on themselves, Yi Chŏnggu composed a memorial to the Chinese emperor clarifying the facts and arguing that the view was baseless. As a result he earned considerable fame in both China and Korea. Although out of favour for a while during the reign of King Kwanghae-gun (r. 1608-1623), he was brought back because of his diplomatic ability and effective Chinese composition. Yi Chŏnggu was recognized for demonstrating the utility and persuasiveness of prose but critics found him short in native ability and elegant brevity and felt his compositions lacking in organization.

Shin Hŭm was a man who had what Yi Chŏnggu lacked. Shin Hŭm also served in diplomacy during the years of the Hideyoshi invasions, spent a long time in exile during the reign of Kwanghae-gun, and received important appointments under Injo, rising to Academician and then Chief State Councilor. He was highly praised for his exemplary composition in the natural 'ancient style', as opposed to the artificial 'parallel prose' style.

Yi Shik passed the examinations during the reign of Kwanghae-gun but opted for self-rustication until Injo ascended the throne. Like the other Four Great Masters, he also served in major posts including Academician and Minister. Yi Shik specialized in prose composition that was artfully shaped and was praised as the pinnacle of the classic 'ancient style'.

Although Chang Yu could not devote himself wholly to the pursuit of literature, he went further than Yi Shik in his support of the independence and purity of literature. In fact, he believed most firmly of the Four Great Masters that their prose style should be widely accepted as a model of composition.

3. Late Period (1720-1910)

Qualitative improvement of Korean literature in Chinese during the late period was comparatively slow compared to the middle period. Early in the period, the newly-emerged, reality-based school of Practical Learning (Shirhak) attacked Neo-Confucianism as doctrinaire and Chinese poetry as unproductive; and, by the end of this period, new cultural influences from Western Europe were undermining the cultural development of Asia as a whole. Not that Chinese literature in Korea was stagnant at the time, for Chinese learning became more widely disseminated than at any time before and the ability to compose Chinese poetry became a cultural requirement even among the country gentry. Moreover, in a phenomenon difficult to perceive in earlier periods, many talented poets were emerging from the commoner class.

In a social development that had its origins in the middle of the seventeenth c., people of
common origins - technical officials, petty clerks, descendants of secondary wives, merchants, and other commoners - emerged as a distinct social class. These townsmen were called *yóhangin* or *wihangin*, terms that refer to people who live 'within the gates' and the people 'of the lanes'. Although the Chinese *hanshi* poetry they wrote was not all that different from the *hanshi* that literati wrote, they called their *hanshi* 'folk songs' (*p'ungyo*) in the proud belief that they had created a 'townsman literature' that was distinct from literati literature.

Although the townsmen earlier had no choice but to suffer lives of suppression, their circumstances changed in the late Chosŏn period. When the literati who were not from politically powerful lineages slipped into ruin and the class system began to come apart as commerce developed, townspeople went into commerce and amassed wealth. They were gaining a position that made the fallen literati seem unimportant to them; indeed, some townspeople thought themselves scholars and even established direct connections with the ruling lineage elite. These circumstances altered the scope of literature in no small way.

Townsmen not only emulated the literati by publishing collections of poetry but, moreover, they also pioneered new writing based on life’s realities. They limited themselves by restricting their interests to literature in Chinese and by making no effort toward a commercial literature that could attract a broad range of readers. However, it is certainly notable that they did justify an expansion in the bearers of literature by arguing that everybody was equipped with the ability to produce literature. They fixed upon a literature that sought meaning in life through personal reflection rather than self-advancement through the examinations.

The movement on the part of townsmen to collect and publish their poetry dates from the palace slave Choe Kinam (1586-1665), who edited *Miscellaneous Songs of Six Poets* (*Yukka chabyŏng*; 1668). It enjoyed much expansion in the next century with the publication of *Folksongs of a Peaceful Reign* (*Sodae p’ungyo*), edited principally by Ko Shiŏn (1671-1734) and Ch’ae P’aengyun (1669-1731) and published in 1737 with introductory remarks contributed by the literatus and poet O Kwangun (1689-1745) among several others. This book marked the starting point for a series of three such anthologies, published at sixty-year intervals (also in 1797 and 1857), ultimately containing the works of one hundred sixty-two townsman poets.

In his introduction, O Kwangun remarks, 'There are those who say that literati go after fame and townspeople go after fortune but the world has changed and now townspeople endeavour with poetry, forsaking fortune and valuing fame.' Ko Shiŏn, as a translator who specialized in Chinese, was a leader of townsman literature in his day. In his collection he remarks that poems by people of low status are in touch with the songs of the masses and that it is therefore proper to refer to them as 'folksongs'.

The most active men of letters during this period - all exponents of the Practical Learning school-- include Pak Chiwŏn (1737-1805) and his followers Yi Tŏngmu (1741-1793), Yu Tükkong (1749-1807), Pak Chega (1750-1805), and Yi Sŏgu (1754-1825). Especially noteworthy for his poetry is Shin Wi (1769-1847).

Pak Chiwŏn was born into an illustrious family but did not sit for the government examinations nor receive any useful education in his youth. What made a difference for him was the opportunity to visit Qing dynasty China with an elder relative and see first hand the changes in China resulting from the influence of Western science and technology. He wrote an account of his travels and experiences, called *Jehol Diary* (*Yŏtha ilgi*). 'Jehol' is the old name for an area of China lying between Korea and the Chinese capital, now called Chengde.

Pak Chiwŏn’s journal is unlike any other travel journal in both structure and expression.
While maintaining a balance between fact and fiction, his eclectic writing style has long been regarded quite singular for its startling technique that employs a variety of narrative viewpoints. This complex and many-sided work defies literary classification. His travel experiences and the many anecdotes related to his journey include matters of his own direct observation, stories heard from others, and incidents fabricated for needs of the moment. Some of the anecdotes like 'The Story of Master Ḥō (Hō-saeng chôn) and 'A Tiger’s Rebuke' (Hojil) could stand alone. Introduced as a story Pak Chiwôn heard from another, 'The Story of Master Ḥō' is about the attempt by an impecunious scholar to shake up the economy of the entire country; and 'A Tiger’s Rebuke', copied from a manuscript he found on his journey, exposes the hypocrisy of a respected Confucian scholar.

Although he did not devote much energy to the writing of verse, his poetry, like his prose, was stamped with his own peculiar style and expression, earning him recognition for its considerable quality.

An old man, who would shoo the birds,  
was sitting on the southern ridge;  
From ears of millet that drooped like dog tails  
dangled yellow sparrows.  
Farm hands, both old and young  
were all out in the fields;  
From dawn to dusk the farmers’ houses  
were latched tight even in the day.

A kite swoops down upon a chick  
and makes a grab but misses, then  
The flock of chickens fuss and cackle  
by the fence where pumpkins bloom.  
The young wife, basket on her head,  
pauses, about to cross the stream;  
And a little child, with his yellow dog,  
hurries after her.

This Chinese poem composed in seven-character lines is called 'Farmhouse' (Chōn’ga). With its life-like description of farm life - as if seen with the eye - his poem brings to mind the paintings of everyday life that were so popular in Korea at the time. However, in his poetry, Pak Chiwôn does not engage in the same bold experiments that characterize his prose but, rather, takes an approach with just the right degree of eclecticism.

Yi Tōngmu (1741-1793), Yu Tükkong (1749-1807), Pak Chega (1750-1805), and Yi Sōgu (1754-1825) followed the lead of Pak Chiwôn and all became equally famous, particularly for their poetry. When Yu Tükkong’s uncle, Yu Yŏn, went to Qing China in 1776, he compiled a collection of poetry by the still-young four poets and published it there with his introduction recounting praise for the verse of the young Koreans by Qing men of letters. The collection was originally published as Collected_Poetry_from_Korean_Visitors (Han’gaek könyôn chip) but later became customarily known as Poetry_of_the_Four_Masters (Saga shi), on the basis of a reference in the introduction to the four poets as the ‘four masters’.

Since Yi Tōngmu’s poems bring one close to the heart of Korean land and life and let one see into the hearts of Korean men and women, Pak Chiwôn dubbed them 'folksongs of Korea'. Yi Tōngmu's poetry maintains the original rhythm and tone of hanṣhi and, since it is rich in picturesque expression, it also gets close to the mores of his times. As one example, we have the following 'On a Farmhouse' (Che chônsa).

Beside a pile of cast-off bean shucks
the lonely path divides;
A red sun rises and slowly spreads,
scattering the herded cows.
So blue and green they seem as dyed-
the distant peaks that bring us fall;
So fresh that I would drink from them-
the clouds that follow after rain.
Shadows of the dancing reeds
give the watching goose a start;
To sounds of cold wind in the rice,
the spotted bass kick up a fuss.
I’d like to move to the mountain’s south
but as for thatch to cut
I’ll have to ask the old man farming there
to let me share a half.

Although Yu Tükkong was not so productive as Yi Töngmu, he was more significant
because of the breadth of his concerns and the range of materials he incorporated in his
poetry. He devoted himself to an understanding of the history of the Korean people and, in
this spirit, toured the sites of many Korean capitals of the past. The upshot was a forty-
three-stanza narrative poem, 'A Poetic Reminiscence of Twenty-one Capitals' (Ishibil to
hoego shi ). Identifying some twenty-one capital sites from Tan’gun’s Old Chosôn to the
state of Koryô, he demonstrates his intention to explore every forgotten byway as he covers
even minor states of the Three Han and Three Kingdoms periods like Kammun (North
Kyôngsang), Usan (today’s Ullu<ng Island off the east coast), and T’amna (Cheju
Island). His history is not just the history of the victors. He deliberately breaks away from
a point of view that favours only the orthodox and adopts a relativistic appraisal of culture.

Even though the nineteenth c. was a time of social and political disquiet, Korean literature
in classical Chinese produced one man whom some critics regard as the best Korean poet in
Chinese of all time. The man was Shin Wi (1769-1847). Kim T’aegyông (1850-1927) -
one of the last great scholar-officials in the orthodox tradition - summed up Shin Wi’s
accomplishments, saying, "With divine exhilaration, Shin Wi’s poetry races like proud
steeds that piaffe and curvet; a poet endowed with the stuff of all creation, he was the
foremost master of Chosôn’s five hundred years."

Shin Wi composed some four thousand poems, a large corpus of work, and his topics and
themes are quite varied. He shows his concern for the hardships of the common people in
poetry like his fifty-poem collection, Miscellany (Chapsô ), and the twelve stanzas of his
‘Quatrains Upon Seeing a Drama’ (Kwan’gûk chôlgu ), written after seeing a performance
of p’ansori oral narrative, provide valuable materials for understanding the new arts of his
day. His forty poems collected under the title, 'Short Popular Lyrics' (So akpu ), being
Chinese translations of Korean shijo verse, constitute a representative work of its sort. In
‘Critical Quatrains on Korean Poets’ (Tongin nonshi chôlgu ) he presents thirty-five critical
quatrains about Chinese poetry by generations of Koreans. This gives evidence that he
raised the edifice of his works on a foundation inherited from the full range of the Korean
literature that had preceded him.

Shin Wi centred the world of his works on a core of poetry that reached the very pinnacle
of sensual elegance. He equipped himself with all the essentials of the aristocratic arts and
was lauded as a triple threat - skilled not only in poetry and calligraphy, but in painting as
well. He invests his compositions with a sense of scenery such as that found in great
painting. He makes maximum use of antithesis and keeps an eye on the delicate harmonies
and contrasts that one sees and feels through the sense of colour. But neither his materials
nor his expression is gaudy. An example would be the following ‘Watching the Moon at a
Fishing Place’:
Rolling waters, moon above the waves;  
Mottled cover, frost between the leaves:  
Frost dazzles like another moon and  
Sinks together into endless seas of mist.  
In the fishing place, a single boulder,  
Rests within the middle of the waters:  
Not knowing whether night is deep or shallow,  
We slowly watch our shadows lengthen.

But there was more to life in Korea in the middle of the eighteenth c. than simply indulging oneself in poetry that reaches for the utmost in sensual beauty. Those aware of the changes of the times had to be on their guard. The louder the outcry of criticism against the ruling system, the more crucially important it became to secure the norms of classical writing.

Composition in classical Chinese, although based upon a foreign writing system, was used to express the thoughts and feelings of Koreans for more than one thousand years and reached its high-water mark during the reign of King Sŏnjo in the late sixteenth c. But, following upon the introduction of Western European culture, the awakening of the masses, and the growing popularity of Korea’s own alphabetic script, the fortunes of Chinese began to ebb. Over the course of the twentieth c. with industrialization and urbanization, new generations of Koreans have found Chinese increasingly irrelevant in their lives. Korean literature has become a literature in Korean.

Marshall R. Pihl

Classical Poetry

Earliest Native Song, the Hyangga

The earliest examples of Korean vernacular song, poetry, or verse, the hyangga ('native song') were gathered in two major collections from the Three Kingdoms, Greater Shilla, and early Koryŏ periods. There are eleven hyangga collected in the Life of Master Kyunyŏ (Kyunyŏ chŏn) a biography of a Buddhist monk which includes eleven of his devotional hymns. The Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk yusa), the thirteenth-c. compilation by the Buddhist monk Iryŏn, contains fourteen examples. All other sources referred to in these two collections and in the twelfth-c. History of the Three Kingdoms, or Samguk sagi, by Kim Pusik, have evidently been lost or destroyed in the intervening centuries. Most notably missing in the Samdaemok, a ninth-c. anthology of songs and poems mentioned in Samguk yusa, and thought to have contained approximately one thousand hyangga texts.

Historical attention to the hyangga was further attenuated by the circumstance of their being Korean rather than Chinese-language compositions. All of the hyangga texts are to be found embedded in Chinese-language narratives, and because the preferred language for formal compositions until the very end of the nineteenth c. was, indeed, Chinese, the hyangga and scholarly study of them remained buried in the Chinese. Not until Ch’oe Namsŏn’s 1928 edition of the Samguk yusa did that particular, folk-oriented compilation reach much of an audience. It should be noted, though, that Ch’oe’s interest was strongly nationalistic, part of the program of cultural nationalism pursued by Korean scholars to recover elements of the Korean cultural past with which to refute Japanese colonialist claims that there was none.

Yet even granted the seemingly pre-eminent esteem given to Chinese culture in pre-twentieth-c. Korea, the very survival of the hyangga may serve to underscore certain
aspects of Korean literary and cultural history. First, despite the privileging of Chinese language and culture, 'Korea' has always exhibited a deliberate selectivity regarding things Chinese which has on repeated occasions made clear the distinction between Chinese and Korean culture, and the consequent, practical need to assess the applicability of Chinese models for Korean adaptive use. At the same time, like any other culture and people, 'Korea' has also displayed a commitment to the view that its own, indigenous qualities as a culture were worthy of attention and preservation.

From such a complex and nuanced attitude came, among other creations, the script known as hyangch'al. Using Chinese written characters, Korean scholars in the ninth c. devised a complex method to write down the Korean language. Some characters were used for their meanings, but spoken as Korean words just, for example, Arabic numerals are used in modern languages. Other characters were used to indicate grammatical meanings, such as the past tense, or the possessive case. Still others were used for their phonetic values only, to represent Korean language syllables having no necessary connection to the Chinese character meaning. This last also happens to be the basis for the Japanese hiragana syllabary, derived from simplified Chinese written characters.

The hyangch'al system made it possible to record Korean-language texts, and it is in this system that we now find Korean-language songs recorded with Chinese characters in the very middle of Chinese language texts, the Samguk yusa and Life of Master Kyunyo. The twenty-five songs so recorded are the hyangga. Among the twenty-five there are hyangga of four, eight, and ten lines in length. The themes of the hyangga range from Buddhist (18 of 25) to the relationship between ruler and subject (2), between man and woman (2), between friends (2), and 'other' (1). The putative composers of these songs include Buddhist monks or believers (18), hwarang knights (3), and others (4).

While the total of only twenty five songs may seem a pitifully small residuum to be called Korea's 'ancient songs', given the exigencies already noted in recording and transmission of the songs, and furthermore, Korea's own precarious history, including the devastating series of major invasions by the Mongols, Japanese, and Manchu peoples (during which the destruction or theft of cultural objects became epidemic practice), the hyangga, few in number yet registering a distinctly Korean voice, and an attitude in several instances of almost saucy savoir faire toward the awesome manifestations of religious, spirit, or ritual power they engage, seem a particularly apt precursor to Korea's literary and cultural history in the ensuing millennium.

A Hyangga Sampler

'Sŏdong's Song'

Princess Sŏnhwa
Has found a secret love.
At night she is in the arms
Of Master Mattung.

This four-line love song is recorded in the fifty-sixth chapter, Book Two of Samguk yusa. The chapter describes how King Mu of Paekche sought to marry Princess Sŏnhwa of Shilla by going to the Shilla capital, teaching the children of the city to sing this song, and then waiting for the royal family to expel the dishonoured princess. According to the story, the trick worked; Master Mattung, also known as Sŏdong in the story, the childhood name of King Mu, met Sŏnhwa on the outskirts of town and took her back to the Paekche capital as his bride.

Like much of the rest of the Samguk yusa, the story of Sŏnhwa and Sŏdong is a
fascinating, compressed treasure-trove of cultural and historical information. King Mu
ruled Paekche during the seventh c.; Princess Sŏnhwa was the fourth daughter of King
Chinp'yŏng of Shilla. A quite different Paekche King, Tongsŏng (479-501) did in fact
marry a Shilla princess in 493. Despite what seem to be concatenations of various reigns
and events, through all of its curious additional details about sweet potatoes, mountains of
gold nuggets, and Sŏdong's trick with the song, the story may well reflect a Paekche effort
to shore up its defences against Shilla by establishing a marriage alliance. The story also
reflects a more general pattern of marriage practice in which the groom travels to the bride's
house for the first night, then brings her home to his house where she will live for the rest
of her life.

The song works as a clever piece of trickery in the story, but in another context with
different names, it might well be any group's teasing song about someone else who might
or might not have a secret, sweet affection for someone.

'Distant Air'

We come we come we come
We come, O woe!
Woeful, all of us,
We come to cultivate piety.

Also from Samguk yusa, this song is said to have been sung by men and women labourers
separating the clay during the construction of a statue of the Buddha during the reign of
Queen Sŏndok. The chapter 'Tangji Wields His Staff' of Samguk yusa Book Four
observes that the song is 'still performed when men and women in rural villages pound
rice'. The chapter speculates that the song may have been a mortar pounding song,
originally, and that the onomatopoeia of the original song's k'ungdŏk k'ungdŏk for the
sound of the pounding was replaced with oda oda, or "We have come, we have come." All
of this speculation in Samguk yusa suggests the compiler Iryŏn's honest uncertainty about
the song's origins, and his curiosity about etymologies and other historical questions. This
in turn reflects Iryŏn's personal interest in preserving the vernacular folk materials which
the Record of the Three Kingdoms as a formal, official historical record, had for the most
part ignored.

'Flower Presentation Song'

By the purple cliff's edge
If you will tell me to let my ox go,
And if you will not be shamed by me,
I will pluck the flowers and give them to you.

A third example of the four-line hyangga, the 'Flower Presentation Song' also conforms to
the interpretative premise that the hyangga may well include examples of love songs or
songs sung by men and women during village rituals. The Samguk yusa chapter in which
this song is recorded tells the story of a Lady Suro who was so beautiful, dragons, spirits
and other beings would carry her away whenever she approached their domains of lakes,
streams, or the ocean. At one point as she was travelling in a procession with her husband,
she noticed flowers growing on a cliff by the sea, and asked her attendants to pluck them.
They replied that no human could climb the cliff, whereupon an old man appeared leading
an ox, who offered to fetch her the flowers.

The late Chŏng Pyŏnguk of Seoul National University suggested that this and other songs
and stories from Samguk yusa might reflect village wedding or fertility rituals much like
those described by Marcel Granet (Festivals and Songs of Ancient China) in his inferential
recreation of prehistoric Chinese village ritual based upon his reading of songs from the
Under the bright moon of the capital
I stayed out late, enjoying it,
but when I returned and looked in my room
I saw four legs.
Two are mine, but whose
are these others?
Once mine, what shall be done
now these others are taken?

The 'Song of Ch'oyong' is the most well known and intriguing of all the hyangga. Indeed, Professor Cho Dongil of Seoul National University wrote of the song and story associated with it that it seems to have acted like a mirror, for the many scholars who have written about it seem to have discovered their own faces peering back at them from the text. The story in Samguk yusa tells that Ch'oyong was one of the sons of the dragon king of the Eastern Sea who returned to the Shilla capital, Kyongju, with King Hon'gang on one of his processions. Ch'oyong was given a beautiful woman as his wife, and an office in the government. The plague demon, however, was so attracted by Ch'oyong's wife that it changed into human form, and went and slept with her while Ch'oyong was away. One night he returned unexpectedly, and discovered what the song describes. Instead of showing anger, however, Ch'oyong went out into the courtyard of the house, where he sang the song and danced. The plague spirit, impressed by Ch'oyong's restraint, bowed down to him promising never to enter a house that had even a simple likeness of Ch'oyong outside. The promise is then said to explain why it was the people of the time put up gate plaques with Ch'oyong's likeness on them.

Considerable scholarly energy has been spent upon explaining why it was that Ch'oyong did behave in so restrained a way. Why, in other words, did he not show anger, and attack more directly the plague spirit intruder? The answer seems an urgent matter in Korea's cultural history because the Ch'oyong dance became a significant ritual in Koryo times, and has been revived in the twentieth c. around an identification of Ch'oyong as a kind of culture hero. Some explanations have it that Ch'oyong displayed traditional Korean restraint in the face of adversity. Others suggest that Ch'oyong was actually a shaman healer, who saw that the woman was ill, that her illness was caused by the plague demon, and knew that a ceremony of song and dance was needed to placate the spirit and cure the woman. Cho Dongil sees in the story a kind of program note for a mask dance performance.

In the early Chosön period, during the reign of King Sejong (r. 1418-1450) two odes were composed that have considerable historic significance, if not literary merit. These are the 'Song of the Flying Dragons' (Yongbi oehlonka) and 'Song of the Moon Reflected in the Waters' (Worin ch'ŏn'gang chi kok). The first was composed by a group of court officials at Sejong's order, both to celebrate and make first official use of the new Korean alphabet in a paean to the founding of the Chosön dynasty. The second, an ode expressing Buddhist themes and images, was composed by Sejong himself upon the death of his wife. (For more on these two odes, see below.)

Partly because of their formal significance as precursors of the royal odes, and in part because of their historic significance as representatives of Korean vernacular expressions from Koryo times, two further types of verse are described here: the twelve anonymous Koryo songs recorded in several fifteenth-c and later music collections; and the six kyonggi-style songs, so named because of the recurring expression, kyonggi ('that sight').
Koryō Songs

Twelve songs dated to Koryō’s early to middle period but recorded only in the fifteenth c. or later music collections are known as Koryō folk songs (Koryŏ sogyo). The subjects of the songs include love, the natural world, and separation from a loved one or, in the common trope, from the ruler. One, ‘The Turkish Bakery’, follows a rather promiscuous individual on her amatory encounters with a shop owner, a monk, and other occupants of the capital. ‘The Song of the Green Hills’ is said to express feelings of despair at the unhappy or precarious living conditions of the time; or perhaps simply a personal sense of unhappiness:

Let us live, let us live;
up the green hills let us live.
Eating wildgrape and silvervine,
up in the green hills let us live.

Yalli yalli  yallansŏng yallari yalla

Cry, and cry, O bird;
sleep, then awake to cry, O bird!
I who am sadder than you,
I sleep and awake just to cry.

(Refrain)

The song ‘Would You Go’ (Kashiri) is another example of a Koryō song which shows many of the features characteristic of folk song: the repeated phrase patterns within the lines and the repeated lines all assembled into a stanzaic structure that is further marked as a unit by a repeated refrain.

Would you go, would you go, would you;
Leaving me, would you go, would you?

Wi ch'ungjulga t'aebyeong sŏngdae

How then am I to go on living?
Leaving me, would you go, would you?

(Refrain)

There is an often-noted thematic and structural resemblance between 'Would You Go' and the well known poem 'Azaleas' by the twentieth-c. 'folk song poet', Sowŏl Kim Chŏngshik.

The three principal music collections in which the Koryō songs were recorded are the Texts of Music Compositions (Akchang kasa) said to have been assembled by the Royal Music Board under kings Chungjong and Myŏngjong (r. 1506-1544 and 1545-1567), the Guide to the Study of Music (Akhak kwebŏm) assembled in 1493, and the Collection of Current Native Music (Siyong hyangakpo) the dates and auspices of which are uncertain, but traditionally ascribed to the same period as the Texts of Music Compositions. Because of the precise system of musical notation used in the collections, and the other supplementary information about musical instruments, performance positions, and other matters, the melodies, rhythmic patterns, and a sense of the performance of these works is recoverable.

Kyŏnggi Songs
The first example of kyonggi songs of the Koryo period, 'Song of the Scholars' (Hallim pyogok) is one of the popular lyrics transmitted in the Music Section of the History of Koryo (Koryo sa; 1454). Its complete text can also be found in Texts of Music Compositions. The distinguishing features of the kyonggi song are so well exemplified in this example that it always appears as the centrepiece of discussions of the form. Because the expression, '...kyonggi ëttë haniikko?' ('How about a sight like that?') occurs repeatedly in these songs, they became widely known as 'kyonggi' songs.

Texts of Music Compositions states that 'Song of the Scholars' was composed by 'various scholars' serving at court. In view of the fact that the term 'hallim' refers to scholars assigned to the court, such as members of the Academy of Letters, attribution to them would have been fitting. There is a persuasive argument that the work was composed in the year 1216. It is thought that it was composed by academicians in the employ of the government of Ch'oe Ch'unghon - the military strongman who controlled the Korean government from 1196 to 1219 - perhaps improvised by them, taking turns, while amusing themselves. The heavily Chinese text given in Texts of Music Compositions is accompanied by a transcription in Korean letters.

The first and last of the eight stanzas that make up 'Song of the Scholars' are:

Yu Wonsun's prose, Yi Illo's verse, Yi Kongno's parallel style;
Yi Kyu-bo the chongon and Chin Hwa of Hallim: Rhyming rivals race the brush!
Yu Ch'ung-gi's policies, Min Kwang-gyun's exegesis,
Kim Yang-gyong's shih and yüeh-fu.
Oh! The sight of their examination hall! How would that one be?
Scholar Kûm ëUi's jade sprouts and disciples,
Scholar Kûm ëUi's jade sprouts and disciples.
Oh! Starting with me, how many are they?

Oh! Oh! Oh! Over the walnut and the honey locust trees;
Red swing hanging, tied up on a red rope;
Pull it then push it, young master Chong!
Oh! Lest the others go so high!
On the path of two slender hands as fair as jade,
On the path of two slender hands as fair as jade.
Oh! The sight of strolling together hand in hand!
How would that one be?

The first stanza lists the names of famous scholars and their literary strengths. The first line celebrates Yu Wonsun, Yi Illo, and Yi Kongno, each outstanding in a specialty - be it prose, verse, or parallel prose. Yi Kyu-bo, who had the rank of chongon, and Chin Hwa, of the Academy of Letters, were of such talent that they could match rhymes and compose poems almost faster than a brush could take them down. Yu Ch'unggi was as famous for his ability to write policy papers - a staple task at government service examinations - as Min Kwang-gyun was for his exegetical studies of the Confucian classics. Kim Yang-gyong was noted for his mastery of the several styles of Chinese poetry. What a scene they would have, the singers of this song inquire, if they could bring all these masters together at a single state examination! The accomplished Kûm Ùi, frequently Chief Examiner at state examinations, cared for his disciples like sprouts as precious as jade.

While stanza one deals with literary composition, stanza two deals with books, and stanza three takes calligraphy as its subject. To this point, the subjects introduced are things that are necessary aspects of a scholar's life and are treated as sources of satisfaction. Succeeding stanzas embellish their elegant and pleasant way of life, singing of wine in
stanza four, flowers in stanza five, music in stanza six, and scenery in stanza seven. Finally, stanza eight depicts the sight of a man and woman holding hands and riding a swing. It is thought that they did, actually, enjoy such a pastime, much as the artists and consumers of the eighteenth-c. genre paintings did, with their scenes of ordinary life, of shop owners, wrestling matches, and men and women on excursions together. The eighth stanza intimates that the rigid separation of men and women which became a characteristic feature of upper-class, Chosŏn-era Korea was not necessarily the 'style' of Koryŏ.

Yi Royal Odes

A number of congratulatory odes composed at the time of the establishment of the new dynasty celebrated the occasion, but even the high school literature textbooks in Korea agree that the literary merit of these works is absent; instead the reader finds an overtly promotional literature. These otherwise unremarkable texts, however, in part because their purposes were directed otherwise than toward literary accomplishment, utilized and for a time fixed the form known as akchang, a term which encompasses meanings ranging from music composition to hymn. The sixteenth-c. Texts of Music Compositions is a gathering of the texts of such pieces.

While the congratulatory effusions of several members of the new government order have not drawn much interest, two major works composed in the akchang form some fifty years after the founding of the dynasty are worth noting. These are the 'Song of the Flying Dragons', a paean to the founding of the dynasty commissioned at the order of King Sejong, and 'Song of the Moon Reflected in the Waters', a long, elegiac composition composed, or at least revised, by King Sejong himself upon the death of his wife. The two make an interesting pair of contrasts. The 'Song of the Flying Dragons' was composed at King Sejong's order, while the other was composed by the king himself upon the death of his wife. The first is a public poem, intended to celebrate the founding of the dynasty, the creation of the new alphabet, and the pre- eminent significance of Confucianism as the state religion and philosophy; the second, based on a research project carried out by Sejong's son into the life and background of the Buddha, is a private poem, expressive of the king's personal grief at his wife's passing, all framed within a Buddhist view of life and its meaning. Both poems, it should be noted, incorporate their Chinese reference-points into the Korean cultural narrative; that is, both the Confucian and the Buddhist references are coopted by their articulation within the Korean vernacular text.

'Song of the Flying Dragons'

The royal odes borrowed their technique and form from several sources. The kyŏnggi-style songs suggest one source for their form of composition and argument, as the assemblage technique in which the stanzas each present a scene or proposition which the reader then compares with a Korean counterpart, and is at last asked to affirm, either directly or indirectly, is reminiscent of the ṭōttō haniikko phrase of the kyŏnggi song. The song is composed in 125 stanzas, of which a few representative examples follow.

(1)
Korea's six dragons fly in the sky
Their every deed was blessed by heaven,
Their deeds tallied with those of sage kings.

(2)
The tree that strikes deep root
Is firm amidst the winds.
Its flowers are good,
Its fruit abundant.
The stream whose source is deep
Gushes forth even in a drought.
It forms a river
And gains the sea.

(6)
The majesty of Shang lost vigour:
He was about to take charge of the country.
At the time the shores of the West River
Were as crowded as on a market day.

Fortune deserted the Koryŏ House:
He was about to take charge of the country.
At the time the shores of the Eastern Sea
Were as crowded as on a market day.

(82)
Upon facing a small scholar
He stood up from his seat.
What do you say about
His reverence for the learned man?

Upon receiving an old scholar
He knelt down with due politeness.
What do you say about
His respect for scholarship?

(Translated by Peter H. Lee)

Stanza one represents the auspicious signs of the six dragons, the founder of the Chosŏn Dynasty, his son, and his four ancestors, in a pictorial form that mirrors the first divination hexagram from the Chinese Book of Changes, the Yi ching. That first hexagram comprises six solid lines, the fifth of which, corresponding to Yi Sŏnggye, the founder of the dynasty and the fifth generation of the Yi family presented in the 'Song of the Flying Dragons', predicts the ascension of a great man to authority. That auspicious sign is associated in the Chinese commentaries with dragons flying in the heavens. The sage kings are the kings of ancient China, rulers of Chou, and referred to in the Confucian and later writings by this phrase, or as the former kings.

The second stanza's first phrase, the tree that strikes deep root, is now a widely recognized, widely taught, phrase symbol for Korea. The phrase was one of President Park Chung Hee's special favourites for his calligraphy. While the tree and the stream may both symbolize the hoped-for longevity and vitality of the new dynasty, it might also be noted that all of the succeeding stanzas of the 'Song' pair an initial Chinese exemplum with its Korean counterpart, so the tree might be read as China, and the stream, as Korea.

Stanza six gives an example of the paired China-Korea structure of the song stanzas. In this instance, the crowds of people who gathered around the soon-to-be new rulers of Shang China and post-Koryŏ Korea were a kind of portent -cum - opinion poll supporting the legitimacy of the dynastic change.

Stanza eighty-two is interesting because the Chinese event referred to in the first half was a visit in 1290 by two Korean officials to the Mongol court of Kublai Khan (1215-1294), founder of the Yuan dynasty, and ruler at the time of Marco Polo’s visits. (Because Polo visited Asia during the Koryŏ period, his later account of his travels gave the West the name for Korea by which it is known today.) The Mongol ruler received the scholar-
officials with proper respect, as did Yi Sŏnggye in the second half of the stanza, one century later, in receiving Yi Saeck upon his return from exile. The stanza also illustrates the kyŏnggi-style song use of the refrain, "What do you say about that?"

'Song of the Moon Reflected in the Waters'

'Song of the Moon Reflected in the Waters' was composed by King Sejong upon the death of his wife, Queen Sŏhn, who died in 1446. The King based the poem upon a life of Sakyamuni prepared at his command by his son, Prince Suyang; both works were completed in 1447. The examples that follow are the two opening stanzas of the work, and two stanzas from the scene in which Sakyamuni, after twelve years' meditation, attains enlightenment, and returns to visit his father the king. Only 194 stanzas, comprising Book One of three, are extant.

(1)
Lofty and great, the Buddha Sakyamuni;
How can such boundless virtue ever be fully told?

(2)
In telling of his deeds in life, though they happened
Far away, let them appear as if before our eyes.
In telling of his teachings, though he spoke them
One thousand years ago, let them be heard again in our ears.

(115)
That after endless days passed in arduous practice
His son had attained enlightenment, this Ut'aya (Sakyamuni's disciple)
reports to the king.
Of missing his son for twelve years and then today
hearing of his attainment, this the father relates.

(116)
As the father tells about his son's youth,
Ut'aya listens, and the son listens also.
When he asks about his son's works this day,
Ut'aya speaks, and the son speaks also.

The 'Song of the Moon Reflected in the Waters' follows a structural pattern much like that of the 'Song of the Flying Dragons': it begins with a couplet, and then proceeds in quatrains to tell the events in the complex series of rebirths and incarnations that led to the birth of the historic Buddha, Sakyamuni. The narrative includes exchanges among the characters in the story, and uses the apostrophe to the reader or hearer, in the form of direct or indirect questions, that is also characteristic of Korean verse literature, of the p'ansori, and then re-emerges in twentieth c. fiction.

The Shijo

The shijo is a short, three-line verse form, one of two Korean vernacular forms practised during the Chosŏn period and continuing to the present.

The chronological point of origin for the shijo form is obscure, for several reasons. The Korean alphabet, han'gul, was invented and promulgated only in the mid-fifteenth c., so shijo attributions to earlier dates than that are uncertain. Second, the three major collections of shijo from which the traditional canon is assembled are all eighteenth c. and later compilations, which also means that lineages, attributions, and other important matters are traditional or speculative rather than documented. Third, because of the normally higher
status assigned to works composed in the Chinese language during the Choson period, only relatively limited attention was given to the shijo up until Ch'oe Namson's pioneering study and anthology, Classes of the Shijo (Shijo t'ı yuch'wi: 1928). Some accounts trace the earliest appearances of the form to the middle and late Koryo period, but most scholars agree that the form was established by the sixteenth c.

While new collections of shijo and other materials continue to be discovered in this century (the Pyöngwa Kagok Collection containing 1 109 shijo texts was discovered in 1956), the three major collections are dated to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: Eternal Words of the Green Hills (Ch'onggu yongôn ; 998 shijo texts) was compiled by Kim Ch'ont'ae k in 1728; Songs East of the Sea; (Haedong kayo; 983 shijo texts) by Kim Sujang, 1763; and the Headwaters of Kagok (Kagok Wöllyu; 839 shijo ), by Pak Hyo w an and An Minyöng, 1876. Two of the modern, standard editions of the shijo are Chông Pyönguk's 1966 Dictionary of Shijo Literature (Shijo munhak sajön ; 2,376 shijo ), and Shim Chewan's 1972 Collected Shijo from All Generations (Yǒktae shijo chónjip ; 3,335 shijo).

The standard, or p'yŏng shijo has four rhythmic groups (u<mbo ) in each of its three lines, usually with a grammatical division at the middle of the line dividing it into two pairs of rhythmic groups. The rhythmic groups, which generally correspond to the major syntactic divisions of the line, have three or four syllables, with some variation beyond. The third line of the shijo combines an unusual syllable count of 3,5,4,3 syllables for the rhythmic groups with a rhetorical 'turn' at the first group, and resolution in the remainder of the line. Two variant forms, the ðössjo and the sasól shijo, add more syllables or rhythmic groups, respectively, to turn the shijo into a somewhat more discursive form.

All shijo were originally composed to be sung to a standard melody, and considerable appreciation is given to a performance that shows the rich, throaty voicing, extended control of the breath, and expression. Professional singers give a startlingly powerful voice to the modest form, but amateurs also enjoy singing the shijo when a traditional piece is required for a social occasion. The traditional subjects for the shijo are Confucian virtues; nature, though not as a directly experienced world but as an ideal state, often contrasted with the turmoil and anxiety of officialdom; and love, said to be the domain of shijo composed by kisaeng, professional women entertainers. There are also a large number of often anonymous, humorous shijo on a variety of themes.

A Shijo Sampler

The most widely known and admired shijo text has for decades been a song that, like others in the canon, is accompanied by a story - in this case, a story of political virtue and dedication, of steadfast refusal to compromise. The author of the shijo was Chông Mongju, one of the most highly regarded statesman-officials of the late Koryo, whose endorsement was sought by the rising Yi family faction, which eventually ended the Koryo dynasty and founded the Choson. One of the Yi family members, Yi Pangwon (1367-1422), a son of dynastic founder General Yi Sŏnggye, offered a shijo to Chông Mongju (1337-1392) at a banquet. (In the translations, the second half of each line is separated and indented.)

What would you do with things this way,
and what could you do with things that way;
and what's to be done with the tangle
of the arrowroot plants on Mansu Mountain?
If we could tangle together just like them,
why, we could enjoy things for a hundred years!

Chông Mongju rejected the invitation to relax his opposition. Instead, he replied with a thoroughly unambiguous song that presumably cost him his life, as he was assassinated
soon after. Chong Mongju :
Though this body dying die,
and dying, die over again;
white bones turn to dust and dirt,
whether the soul exist or not;
there can never be a way to change
this heart devoted to my lord.

It is clear that the admiration for the *shijo* is very much a measure of admiration for Chong’s political stand; in other words, the story which accompanies a *shijo* song is an important part of its meaning. The story and the song would tend to reassert the values of their time, and in the case of works which made their way into the school curriculum in South Korea in the twentieth c., traditional *shijo* would reaffirm the patriotic, nationalistic values which the curriculum was intended to instill.

Chong Ch’ŏl (1536-1593) composed over seventy *shijo*, and is even more highly regarded for his *kasa* compositions. Because his political fortunes took so many disastrous turns in the factional conflicts of the later sixteenth c., Chong Ch’ŏl seems to have been a regular traveller on the road to exile, and wrote a number of *shijo* about his situation. In the conventions of the age, direct reference to one’s situation, and any complaint about the ruler’s decision, were eschewed. Instead, a *shijo* would take its shape around the theme of lovers who had been separated, a literary conceit made possible by the double meaning of the Korean word *nim*, both lord, as in Chong Mongju’s *shijo* above, and love, in this *shijo* by Chong Ch’ŏl:

Snow has fallen in the pine woods,
and every branch has blossomed.
I shall pluck one branch and send it
to the place where my love stays.
As long as he shall have seen it,
what matter, if the flowers melt?

Naturally enough, the situation of exile and the *shijo* composed in that unhappy state became - or perhaps already was - a literary convention, precisely as lyric poems in any tradition are built upon the premise of separation. In a mirror image of the official’s situation, most of the *shijo* ascribed to *kisaeng* women are also about the pains of being separated from their loves, who usually turn out to be officials who had been sent into exile. One *shijo* ascribed to the most well known of the *kisaeng*, a woman named Hwang Chini who lived in the early sixteenth c., reverses the whole convention by taking the position of the one who had sent the man away. Interestingly, her *shijo* is also ascribed in one of the anthologies to a king, an authorial switch that, if nothing else, emphasizes the conventionalized nature of the roles occupied by the characters in these literary works.

Alas, what have I done?
Didn’t I know how I would yearn?
If I had told him Stay,
how could he have gone? Stubborn,
I sent him away, and now
such longing I do learn!

Hwang Chini’s *shijo* verse is also unusual in the enjambment of the second line. In almost all *shijo*, the ends of the lines coincide with a full sentence or clause ending grammatical form, but in a deft linguistic analogue to the impetuous act of the poem, the second line runs on through the adverbial form *stubborn* into the unhappy realization of the consequences of the act in line three.
Yun Sŏndo (1587-1671) was an extraordinarily gifted composer of shijo. Like Chŏng Ch’ol an official who experienced a full share of political setbacks, Yun is known for shijo that express the timeless, stable tranquility of nature and of scholarly pursuits. Yun’s themes were, in this sense, quite thoroughly conventional; but beyond the elegant phrasing of his songs on conventional themes, Yun Sŏndo also carried the shijo form itself to a level of broadly acknowledged perfection. The language of his shijo is measurably ‘more Korean’ than most other shijo composers, having a far lower percentage of words derived from the Chinese language. Yun also changed the formal structures of his shijo, relaxing the syllable count of the final lines, for example, or adding onomatopoetic refrains to sequences of songs, as in his Fisherman’s Calendar. Here follows a selection from the 'Spring' section of the 'Calendar'.

Tread the flowering grasses,
   pluck the orchids and iris.
Launch the boat. Launch the boat.
What was loaded into
   the leaf-flat boat?
Chigukch’ong, chigukch’ong, òsawa .
On the way out, nothing but mist;
   coming back, the moon.

The final shijo in the 'Fisherman's Calendar' sequence provides an example of the òssijo , the slightly expanded form that adds a few syllables to the lines, but acknowledges the distinctive syllabic pattern of the final line, in this case 3, 6 (rather than 5), 3,4 (rather than 4,3):

Now that day is ending,
   time for rest after the feast.
Make the boat fast. Make the boat fast.
In ecstasy walk the path
   where red flowers lie scattered on the wind-blown snow.
Chigukch’ong, chigukch’ong, òsawa .
As the frosty moon crosses over the western ridge,
   lean against the pine sill.

The sasŏl shijo , the substantially expanded form that came into popular use in the eighteenth c., is represented by huge quantities of anonymous compositions on a very broad range of topics, many of them humorous, and not a few, risqué. One of the most amusing is a hilariously straight-faced send-up of the notoriously tense relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, who usually lived in the paternal home.

How did it happen? However did it happen?
   Oh mother-in-law, what shall I do?
I was putting rice into the cauldron
   and the handle of the brass ladle broke!
   Oh mother-in-law, how did it happen?
There, now, girl; don’t fuss so much,
   it often happened to me when I was young.

Translation by Richard Rutt

Chŏng Ch’ol, in addition to the many standard shijo and kasa for which he is known, also composed a drinking song in the sasŏl form. The song echoes Chinese songs on the same subject, but is noted particularly for its use of the Korean language. It also seems to echo, in a peculiarly haunting way, Chŏng Mongju’s bravely defiant song from two centuries before.
Drink a cup, then drink another cup,
and counting flowers to keep the count, drink and endlessly drink.
After this body dies, covered with a straw mat and roped to a pack frame,
or borne on a splendid bier as thousands weep,
it will pass among the reeds and rushes, or willows and oaks;
and when the sun shines golden, and the moon, white,
while the rain drizzles down, or chill winds whirl the heavy snows,
who will there be to say, Drink a cup?
And when some monkey is sadly whistling on your grave,
what good will regrets be then?

Modern practitioners of the shijo form have experimented with it in a number of ways, 
sometimes reducing the numbers of syllables, or the number of rhythmic groups in the
lines, deploying the lines and words on the page in various ways, or creating sequences of
several shijo. Many modern composers of shijo treat the form in a more conservative way.
Hwang Chini, Chǒng Ch’ol, and Yun Sǒndo might find their innovations and practises
rekapitulated in the modern uses of the form, but one might venture to assume that they
would be pleased at the vitality of the tradition. To close with one example, Yi Hou (1912-1970)
was a poet who combined a more traditional, formal approach with an unmistakably
modern subjectivity.

'Flowering'

The flower blooms, one petal, one petal.
The whole sky is opening.
Finally, with the one remaining petal,
the fern stands trembling at last.
The sun and the wind hold their breath.
I too just close my eyes.

The Kasa

The kasa as a Korean vernacular verse form is commonly paired, and contrasted, with the
shijo. Both were developed as verse forms during the Chosŏn period, and both continued
to be practised in the twentieth c.; but where the shijo is a short form, the kasa is long;
where the shijo form lends itself to short, pithy, lyric statements, the kasa, being of
indeterminate length, is sometimes viewed as a form of rhythmic prose taking its shape as a
literary work from the events of narrative, the sequence of details of description, or the
logical steps in a philosophical argument rather than from the form itself.

While various antecedents of the kasa have been adduced, it is generally agreed that the
first true kasa was the 'Song to Spring' (Sangch’un kok) by Chǒng Kūgin (1401-1481),
an idealized evocation of the natural world in the established tradition of implicit
commentary on the difficulties of public life.

Because the kasa as a verse form lends itself so unobtrusively to balanced prose
composition, the number of kasa texts is difficult to assess. Any person who could write
with the Korean alphabet could compose a kasa on whatever subject was desired, and
many did. The used book stores in the 1970s and 1980s in Seoul and other cities kept
cartons of kasa, some in scrolls, and some in books sewn together, which families
cleaning out a study or home library had discovered and sold for next to nothing. Kasa
were written as travel diaries; they were composed by women who found in the form a way
to express their resentment at the confinement of their lives; or by men and women in the
form or guise of such complaints. Numbers of such kasa remain hidden in the prose of
such notebooks, journals, diaries, and other scraps.
In the late nineteenth c. Enlightenment period, the *kasa* was used to articulate modern ideas in the newspapers, journals, and other publications of the day. The *kasa*’s rhythmic form, the characteristic 4-4 syllabic patterning of paired syntactic phrases, underlies such early examples of modern fiction as Yi Injik’s (1862-1916) *Tears of Blood* (*Hyŏl ūi nu*). With greater variation in the syllable pattern, the *kasa* also appears in more recent narrative poems in South Korea, while in the North, the form has been used for poems composed on public, state themes such as farm machinery, collectivization, and other officially assigned topics.

Because the *kasa* was recited rather than sung in public performance like the *shijo*, *kasa* texts were not assembled in performance anthologies like the eighteenth and nineteenth c. *shijo* collections. *Kasa* instead tended to have been gathered among individual collections of writings, a few of which, such as Songgang Chŏng Ch’ŏl’s (1536-1593) *Pine River Anthology*, became widely known.

As with the *shijo*, the *kasa* verse line comprises four rhythmic groups corresponding to its major syntactic divisions. Syllabic distribution within the groups very generally follows a three-four or four-four pattern. In the *kasa* of earlier Chosŏn, roughly up until the eighteenth c., the final line of a *kasa* text was marked structurally by the 3,5,4,3 syllable pattern, and rhetorically by the *shijo* - like ‘twist’ or verbal aside in the first group of the line. Later *kasa* do not have this distinctive pattern.

The history of the *kasa* form has been divided into three broad periods. *Kasa* in early Chosŏn were written by members of the ruling class, the *yangban*, and tended to be comparatively short; *kasa* of later Chosŏn are associated with the lives of non-elite members of the society, and were comparatively long. Enlightenment period *kasa* of the decades surrounding the close of the nineteenth c. are characterized by their attention to modern ideas. The more recent *kasa* from North Korea on public themes can be viewed as a continuation of the didactic impulses of the Enlightenment period.

A Kasa Sampler

For a number of reasons, Chŏng Kiŭgin’s ‘Song to Spring’ serves an exemplary purpose as the first example of the *kasa* form. It was written after the promulgation of the Korean alphabet, *han’gul*, and is included in its author’s collected writings so the problems of somewhat murky ascription which attend literary works written prior to the alphabet’s invention are avoided. Although the precise date of its composition is not known, it was evidently written some time during Chŏng’s years of exile, following his resignation from the government in 1455 upon Sejo’s usurpation. ‘Song to Spring’ celebrates the life of rural retirement, a frequent theme in the *kasa* that followed in the next century of bitter factional strife. Chŏng Ch’ŏl’s *kasa*, to cite the most famous example from the next century, engage the theme of exile, treating it either in terms of the travel into the place of exile, or through the metaphor of the abandoned lover, as in the many *shijo* on the same theme.

‘Song to Spring’ is relatively short - just thirty-eight lines. The following excerpts will provide a sense of its treatment of its theme, the voice, and the somewhat abstract nature of the descriptions, which in the end sound more like an appreciative commentary on a hanging scroll landscape painting than an account of actual life events.

‘Song to Spring’

You who are buried in the dust of this world,
what do you think of my life?
Do I match, or do I not,
the refinement of men of the past?
Though quite alone, the only man
between the earth and sky
Would I still not know joy
buried in these woods?

I build a small, thatched cottage (5)
close by the jade green stream,
and amidst groves of pine and bamboo
play host to the wind and moon.

Winter was gone a few days ago;
as spring returns anew
blossoms of peach and apricot
bloom in the evening light,
while thick grasses and willows glow
green in the misting rains.

Listen to me neighbours! Let us go (17)
view the hills and streams.
Let us walk through the fields today
and bathe in the stream tomorrow;
in the morning gather greens on the mountain,
then fish in the stream at evening.
Let us take the fresh-brewed wine, (20)
strain it through a hat,
and drink, plucking flowers
from a branch to keep count.

The old man grasps his stick; (25)
the boy lifts the wine to his shoulder.
Quietly reciting, I settle down
alone by the side of the stream.
In the clear, bright sand I scour
the cup, fill, and raise it.
Looking down on the clear waters
I see peach blossoms.
Fabled Mu Rōng must be near.
These domains must be the place.

Through pines on a narrow path (30)
classing azaleas in my arms
I reach the very topmost heights
and gaze down from the clouds.
Thousands of hamlets, myriad villages
spread out below, everywhere.
Fog and mist and the sun's brightness
seem to weave a brocade
as fields that lay dark a few days ago
are flooded with colours of spring.

Renown escapes me, (35)
wealth and rank spurn me,
but the clear moon and bright sun -
What other friends would I have?
With gourd, basket, and wretched shelter,
my thoughts are free of confusion.
Tell me then, for a hundred years' pleasure
what could surpass just this?

The two acknowledged masters of the kasa form, Pak Illo (1561-1642) and Chŏng Ch'ŏl (1536-1593), approached the form in quite different ways, illustrating at least two of the potential directions in Chŏng Kūgin's 'Song to Spring'. One is the capacity of the kasa form to absorb or encompass brief lyric sequences, much like the shijo, as in the stretches (lines 3-6) 'Though quite alone, the only man... host to the wind and moon', or (lines 33-35) 'Fog and mist and the sun's brightness... flooded with colours of spring'. Chŏng's 'Song to Spring' nicely balances such lyric segments with equally brief narrative stretches, such as (lines 25-27) 'The old man grasps his stick... the cup, fill, and raise it', or with moments of direct spoken address, as it were, directed toward Chŏng's rustic 'neighbours' (line 17), or the imagined audience for oral performance, the 'You' of the very first line of the poem. One might imagine, then, a shijo strung together like a necklace from a long sequence of highly polished, lyric moments; one would have Chŏng Ch'ŏl. Conversely, one might imagine a kasa that settles in more squarely to a narrative mode of development, even one that incorporates dialogue within the narrative rather than using it as an aside to the reader or listener; one would then have Pak Illo.

Let us look at the 'Song of Longing' (Sa miin kok) by Chŏng Ch'ŏl.

'Song of Longing'

At the time I was born
I had been born to follow my lord.
Our lives were destined to be joined,
as even the heavens must have known.
When I was young
my lord loved me.
There was nothing to compare
with this heart and love.

Now that I am older, (6)
for what reason have I been put aside?
A few days ago, serving my lord
I entered the Moon Palace.
How does it happen that since then
I have descended to this lower world?
Three years it has been
since my hair, once combed, became tangled.
I have powders and rouge (10)
but for whom should I make myself lovely?
The cares that are knotted within my heart
pile up, layer upon layer.
It is sighs that build up,
tears that tumble down...

Briefly the east wind blows (17)
and melts away the fallen snow.
Two or three branches have bloomed
on the plum tree outside the window:
a bold brightness,
a fragrance deep and mysterious.
At dusk the moon (25)
shines by the bedside.
As if sensing him, rejoicing
-is it my lord, or not?-
I wonder, if I broke off that blossom
and sent it to the place where my lord stays,
what would he think
as he looked at you?

Blossoms fall, new leaves appear,
and shade covers.
Silk curtains are lonely; (25)
embroidered curtains are opened.
I close the lotus screen
and open the peacock screen...
How can a day be so tedious,
so full of cares?

... 
Heaven and earth are blockaded
under white monochrome.
Humans, even birds on the wing
have disappeared.
With the cold so intense (45)
here, far to the south,
in the lofty Jade Tower
how much colder it must be!

... 
I tuck my red skirt up,
and roll my blue sleeves halfway,
and as the day declines, by high, thin bamboos (50)
I lean on a staff, lost in thought.
The brief sun sinks swiftly;
the long night settles aloft.
I set the inlaid flute
by the side of the blue lamp
and rest, hoping
to see my lord, even in a dream.
Cold, cold is the quilt!
O, when will night become day?

... 
I would rather die and become (60)
a swallow-tail butterfly.
I would light upon each flowering branch
one after another, as I went,
till I settled, with perfumed wings
upon the garments of my lord.
O, my lord, though you forget my existence,
I shall attend you.

Chŏng Ch'ŏl's 'Song of Longing' seems assembled as a series of lyrical fragments, held together by the theme of longing for the lord, nim -the ruler -who has dismissed the loved one, or the official, Chŏng Ch'ŏl. While there is a certain modulation in tone, from the more vigorous complaint of lines 6-9, 'Now that I am older, for what reason have I been put aside?' to the enervated, listless tone of lines 24-27, especially, 'I close the lotus screen and open the peacock screen...', the overall voice is restrained, indirect, gentle, and the poem uses the details of the physical environment as effective counterpoints to the
speaker's feelings. In other words, the kasa is an extended lyric.

Pak Illo used quite different means to achieve a very different effect in his 'Song of a Humble Life' (Nuhang sa), also composed on the subject of a life in rusticated exile. In the sequence below, the speaker travels to his neighbour's home to borrow an ox to plough the field. Most of the scene is developed and carried by the dialogue between the borrower and potential lender, as if Ch'ong Kŭgin had extended the dialogue started by "Listen to me neighbours!" to include what the neighbours might have said in reply. In Pak's kasa, the speakers' thought processes are suggested rather than explained by their dialogue, and in an amusing and deft conclusion, the dejected appearance of the speaker is reflected in his dog's noisy reaction upon his return.

'Song of a Humble Life' (excerpt)

...On a moonless night I push my steps
to the house where I had a kind of promise
for the loan of an ox.
I stand alone
outside the tight-shut gate,
cough loudly,
and after a while hear
"Well, who is out there?"
"Shameless I."

"What brings you out
at this hour of the night?"

"I am in need like this
every year, I know, but there is no ox at my poor house,
only many debts, so I have come."

"I know I said I would loan it
for nothing, or for a little,
but last night the fellow
from the house across the way
cooked up a red-throated pheasant
all dripping with juices,
and had me drinking fresh spring wine
till I was tipsy.
Thinking I simply had to repay
such generosity
I made him a promise
for the loan of my ox tomorrow.
I would be ashamed to break a promise.
What can I say?"

"Well if that is so
there is nothing to be done."

With shabby hat drooping, in worn-down sandals,
dispiritedly I trace my way home.
At my crestfallen appearance
the dog starts barking.

The dialogue in this remarkable passage seems quite thoroughly normal, colloquial, while
the line divisions and their balanced structure seem characteristics of that natural speech rather than requirements of the verse form. In short, the passage demonstrates that Korean writers who were striving to develop a modern idiom for fiction as well as poetry in the early twentieth c. had an accomplished if largely unacknowledged forbear in Pak Illo.

David R. McCann

Classical Prose in Korean

Extended prose written in the Korean language was not possible until there was a writing system capable of the task. While the orthodox written language of Korea was classical Chinese until the end of the nineteenth c. a pure Korean writing system was devised in 1443 under the aegis of the renowned King Sejong (r.1418-1450) and promulgated in 1446. This innovation - then called 'Correct Sounds for Instructing the People' (Hunmin chŏngüm ) but now known as han'gul -made it possible for Koreans to break away from the constraints of earlier, awkward systems - like the idu method favoured by clerks - that were based upon the use of Chinese characters to record Korean and eke out its grammar.

The scholars charged with this historically unparalleled undertaking chose not to improve upon other writing systems then already in use but, rather, carried out the first pre-modern phonemic analysis of any language, according to sophisticated linguistic principles which had their origins in Indian Sanskrit scholarship. Then they created a completely new set of consonant and vowel letters, all systematically related to each other and based upon the shapes of the human organs of articulation as used to utter each sound.

With the creation of hunmin chŏngüm , many potentialities were created all at once for a transition toward literature in the Korean script, but the new alphabet had to struggle through several stages of history to get to the point where, in competition with Chinese and borrowed character transcription, it could expand the scope of its use and finally force Chinese and idu out of favour, as finally occurred in the twentieth c .

The immediate intent behind the creation of the hunmin chŏngüm script is still not definitively established. It was not a system to serve the needs of the ruling aristocracy at that time, for they were engaged in sophisticated writing in Chinese; and, even if they might have felt some occasional difficulty with Chinese, it was hardly enough to necessitate the creation of a new script. Since the ability to read and write classical Chinese distinguished them from the common people, many aristocrats were unenthusiastic about a writing system that could be used by high and low alike.

The words of our language, being different from those of China, do not coincide well with Chinese writing. Therefore, there are many ignorant common people who, although they have matters they wish to express, in the end, cannot easily communicate them. Thinking unfortunate, We have newly made twenty-eight letters, only that they be easy for everyone to learn and that they be convenient to use in daily life.

This statement from King Sejong's own Preface to the vernacular promulgation, expresses the intent behind the creation of hunmin chŏngüm . It clearly reveals the script as meant for ignorant commoners who did not know Chinese. But Sejong's motivation obviously went further than providing commoners with a script they could use by themselves. When answering an argument opposing the creation of the alphabet, Sejong responded that, although clerks in local government offices were already using the idu transcription system among themselves, there were many cases of unjust judgments against commoners who could not effectively petition for themselves but that a new script would rectify the situation. The goal of getting government clerks to use the new system instead of idu was never realized as conceived. These hereditary clerks protected their exclusive status by continuing to use their peculiar idu writing system that used Chinese to record Korean.
However, an even more important function of hunmin ch'ongum lay in conveying the court's intent to the common people, who were ignorant of Chinese. A script that commoners could read was needed in order to instruct the lower classes in what was expected of them according to Confucian ethical norms and, in addition to ideological enlightenment, to instruct them in such things as farming techniques and the treatment of disease.

In view of the fact that composition of lengthy poetic works in the new script like 'Song of the Flying Dragons' (Yongbi oeh'on ka; 1447) and 'Song of the Moon in the Waters' (Wörin ch'ôn'gang chi kok; 1449) followed immediately after promulgation of the writing system in 1446, we can surmise that such compositions had been contemplated from the very outset. What is more, they also embarked on a massive program of translation into Korean of major portions of the Confucian and Buddhist Chinese canon soon after the new script had been promulgated.

While aristocrats continued to use Chinese and regard literature in Chinese as their own special province, they also enjoyed writing poetry in Korean and thus promoted the development of the vernacular shijo and kasa verse forms. This co-existence of Korean with Chinese in aristocratic literature was due to the fact that the poetry in Korean was meant to be sung and it was, therefore, necessary to record the exact wording for later performance.

Whereas aristocratic womenfolk were not given opportunities to become skilled in Chinese, they used the Korean script extensively in their daily lives, thus contributing to conditions that enabled the development of fiction in Korean. When the bourgeoisie and other commoners during the later Chosŏn period came to use Korean writing in their daily lives and sought a literature that was both entertaining and socially realistic, literature in Korean grew rapidly and became a challenge to literature in Chinese. Thereupon, by the early twentieth c., Korea had arrived at the point where the national script was exclusively used and the literature of Korea was a literature in Korean.

The first prose composition of significant length composed in the new vernacular script was a biography of Sakyumuni, the historical Buddha: Details from the Life of Sakyamuni. When King Sejong's queen died in 1446, he asked his son, Prince Suyang, to prepare this work as an appeal for Buddhist blessing for the dead queen. The resulting, 24-volume undertaking moved the king to compose a lengthy narrative poem summarizing its main points, called 'Songs of the Moon Shining on One Thousand Rivers.'

Prince Suyang's prose work remains faithful to his Buddhist sources but, at the same time, it is a pioneering example of a dignified and elegant prose style. While the sentences are frequently cast in great length there is no confusion; and, although he works with great volumes of information -both primary and collateral - the digressions are well knit into the main plot line. Of particular note are the natural dialogue and detailed description that make the text an interesting one to read.

In one passage, Sakyamuni is the sage Sŏnhye, who is negotiating to buy flowers from the woman Kui. She is unwilling to sell but finally sets the condition that she become his wife for life after life. When he refuses to be 'tied to destined relationships', she responds, "If you do not follow my wishes, you will not get the flowers." Knowing that he has been bested, Sŏnhye accedes to Kui's wishes.

In addition to stories from the lives of Sakyamuni, there are many collateral tales as well. Particularly notable among them are such stories as those of Prince Inyok, who sacrificed to his father the pupils of his eyes and the marrow of his bones; Lady Nongmo, who was born the daughter of a deer and became queen; Prince Allakkuk, whose mother suffered the
infliction of murder; and Prince Sŏnu, who became blind because of his younger brother. The last two were later adapted as vernacular novels. But all of these stories demonstrate Buddhist mysteries through events that are not acceptable in the empirical world and thus it was difficult for this kind of writing to merge with a narrative tradition that did not deal in such mystery.

The introduction of a vernacular script made possible the translation of Confucian and Buddhist canon into Korean, something that had been tried without success using cumbersome methods based on the use of Chinese characters. These translations into Korean were called ǒnhae, 'vernacular explanation'. King Sejong's death in 1450, and two unproductively short reigns that followed, delayed a long-anticipated ǒnhae translation project until the reign of King Sejo (r. 1455-1468), who had been the former Prince Suyang. Primarily interested in Buddhist scripture, Sejo set up a supervisory office in 1461 and, in the following year, began an effort that produced thirty-four works of prose in Korean translation. This body of work was distinguished by its attempt to use a pure Korean locution and avoid the use of undigested Chinese terms and phrases. However, because of the increasingly anti-Buddhist orientation of government officials and the consequently declining fortunes of Buddhism, the translations never realized their potential in helping to shape Korean vernacular prose style.

The translation of Confucian canon did not get under way until well into the next century and was not completed until 1585. The resulting fifty-four books, comprising the corpus known collectively as the 'Four Books and Three Classics' (1612), were printed in great numbers and distributed widely throughout the country. This initial printing and subsequent reprints over succeeding generations served as the basic medium of instruction for every aristocratic male for more than three hundred years. The style of these ǒnhae texts, meant only to explicate, was awkwardly faithful to the Chinese originals and a dominant influence on the style of Korean composition until the supple rhythms of oral literature surfaced in the written realm in the early twentieth c.

The work of Korean fiction most commonly offered as the earliest example of classical prose in the mainstream tradition is The Tale of Hong Kidong by Hŏ Kyun (1569-1618). Though replete with its own magic and implausibilities, this tale fits comfortably within a tradition of stories that involve Taoist magic. The tale is strongly tied to the real world by its political theme which advocates the civil rights of illegitimate sons, who were then legally disinherited by dint of their birth. While episodically constructed, the tale has plenty of humour and action, recalling Robin Hood of the Western tradition. Stylistically, however, The Tale of Hong Kidong is wooden, lacking the undulant flow of natural language. It reads as though heavily influenced by the stiff ǒnhae style which had been introduced with the translation of Confucian classics in Korean.

The Tale of Hong Kidong heralded the popular fiction which made up the lion's share of written prose until the twentieth c. More than five hundred (some say six hundred) titles of these popular works are known today but only two-thirds them are represented by the books themselves, the others having disappeared with only a passing reference elsewhere to speak for their transient existence. In addition, we can assume that countless others have come and gone without leaving a trace, for none of the existing works can be dated prior to the middle of the nineteenth c.

Except for about thirty, most of the works are anonymous. Two reasons are commonly advanced for this: either the aristocratic authors were avoiding an embarrassing association with vulgar literature or names were dropped in the process of making manuscript copies, then the usual means of reproduction. This phenomenon is paralleled by the situation in shijo poetry, where nearly one-half of the extant poems are of unknown authorship. Whereas we can suspect that many anonymous shijo were the work of professional singers, it is also possible that some of the anonymous popular fiction was produced by
members of a 'middle class' that was emerging in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, made up of technical bureaucrats, petty officials, merchants, and monied commoners.

The breadth and variety of popular fiction in Korean is best suggested by looking at the range of its content. Among the many classification systems put forward over the years that by Kim Kidong is the most highly developed. Based upon his work, there are ten fundamental categories: adventure, romantic love, parable, Taoist, historical, heroic, family, ethical, and satirical. To this some scholars add written works drawn from the oral narrative tradition but we shall treat them separately because they are distinct in form, content, and style. Although written in Korean, many of these works of popular written fiction drew upon Chinese precedents for their inspiration. The student of Chinese literature will immediately recognize titling conventions that identify the type of fiction by the last word of the title: -mong (‘dream’, Ch. meng ), -chön (‘chronical’, Ch. chuan ), -rok (‘record’, Ch. lu ), and -ki (‘record’, Ch. ji ). Finally, it is notable not only that each work normally has a Chinese version written by a Korean but also that more than two-thirds of them are set in China.

Popular fiction is basically didactic and reflects the Confucian values of the traditional Korean aristocracy. Since the main characters are frequently paragons of virtue presented as exemplars of ideal behaviour, their individual characters are not developed; furthermore, the story as a whole is also usually in the service of ideals, to reprove vice and promote virtue. As we shall see, the wooden style and didactic intent of classical Korean fiction by men contrasts vividly with the personal style of women's court memoirs.

The woman's court memoir is represented by only three major examples, primarily because of the practice of rinsing and re-using the valuable paper on which they were written but also because of traditional restrictions on the dissemination of news of court politics. The inside stories of the court contained in these memoirs contribute to a larger body of writing, mostly in Chinese, that is known as unofficial histories (yasa ). But, at the same time, the memoirs frequently receive separate consideration as an independent form of prose literature because they are written in Korean and present both a personal of a point and an expression of emotional experience.

The royal palace of the Chosôn period consisted of an extended family, centred on the king, and it lived as an independent household unto itself. It was the residence of such family members as the Queen Mother, Crown Prince, princes and princesses, and court ladies. Within each of these establishments a public journal was kept by the eunuchs assigned there. But, at the same time, the ladies of the court, for their part, kept their own, independent records of internal events. Among the attendants of the queen and queen mother were women well versed in the classics. Having excellent calligraphy, they transcribed for the royal wives the daily letters of greeting they would send to their original families still living outside the palace.

Letter-writing was a skill expected of well-trained women of literate families. Though a woman was denied the lessons in Chinese and the classics given the men of the family, she was expected to express herself effectively in epistolary form, using pure Korean. This was a skill made necessary by the fact that, when a woman went in marriage to her husband's family, she rarely had an opportunity to return home. Ironically then, because of the discriminatory treatment received by women during the Chosôn period, they contributed a unique style of composition to Korean writing.

The foremost example of the woman's court memoir is A_Record_of_Sorrow (Hanjungnok ) by Lady Hong of Hyegeyum Palace (1735-1815). Daughter of the prime minister, Lady Hong was selected as the wife of Crown Prince Sado when she was only ten and, from that time on, had no contact with her own family or friends. In spite of what might seem a redeeming and fortunate situation, her life was made a torment by the rage of her father-in-
law, King Yongjo, who starved her husband to death in a rice chest when Sado was twenty-eight. Her son Chongjo succeeded his grandfather as king in 1776, reigning until 1800.

Lady Hong's single work - variously titled A Record of Crying Blood, A Record of Sorrow, and Reminiscences in Retirement - was started in 1795 and completed in 1805 and was written to vindicate her husband's tragic death and give a true account of the deaths of her relatives. Her work is distinguished from the other two extant court memoirs in Korean because Lady Hong speaks in the first person.

In the waning years of the Choson period, a new genre joined classical written prose in Korea as libretti of p'ansori, the oral narrative, began to appear in woodblock editions. Unlike other classical fiction, these were not created originally as written literature but, rather, were adapted from a thriving and popular oral tradition. Whereas the texts of the earliest woodblock imprints were drawn more or less directly from the performed tradition, type-set editions of the early twentieth c. were frequently embellished with new openings and other interpolations provided by the editor. Nevertheless, since these works were not closely rewritten, they still retain the rhythmic quality that is the earmark of performed literature. These woodblock and type-set versions of the traditional p'ansori oral narrative are frequently called 'p'ansori novels' to distinguish them from the written literature that makes up the lion's share of classical prose in Korea.

Marshall R. Pihl

Oral Literature

Korean oral literature comprises four types: saying (adage, riddle), story (myth, legend, folktale), song (folksong, kut song, p'ansori song), and nori (shaman kut nori, puppet play, mask drama). A kut is the ritual in which a shaman dances and sings in worship of a spirit. The word nori means 'play' in its broadest sense, including not only drama but also revelling, merrymaking, and other festivity.

1. Saying : Adage and Riddle

The saying includes both adage and riddle. These are the simplest forms of oral tradition and can be used by anyone in everyday life. While the inner meaning of an adage is characteristically didactic, that of the riddle is not usually so. If the former is a lesson the latter is a game. The riddle is further distinguished from the adage by its essential test of wit ('Do you know why...?') and the necessity of two parties to carry out its unique question and answer format.

The adage attracted scholastic attention early on, about a century after the first English collection, John Heywood's Proverbs (1546). Korean scholars like Hong Manjong (1643-1725), Yi Tongmu (1741-1793), and Chong Yagyong (1762-1836) collected, analyzed, and translated them into Chinese. In his miscellany, A_ Fortnight's Record (Sunoji ; 1678), Hong Manjong advised that the adage was not to be shunned but, rather, that it could serve to supplement even the knowledge of wise men. The collection and analyses of adages continues to the present day. A standard Korean reference for more than thirty years has been the 7 000-entry Dictionary of Adages (Soktam sajon ; 1962) edited by Lee Kimoon. A 1993 collection edited by Kim Tohwan (Hanguk_soktam_hwaryong_sajon ) runs to 665 pages.

Samples of Korean Adages (with English equivalents)

A monk can't shave his own head. (No man is an island.)
To begin is half done. (Well begun is half done.)
Repair the gate after the robbery. (Lock the barn door after the horse is stolen.)
Mention a tiger and he appears. (Speak of the devil.)
He who bows is not slapped. (No one spits on a smiling face.)
Does smoke come from a fireless chimney? (Where there's smoke there's fire.)
Lie back and spit in the air. (Bite off your nose to spite your face.)
A poor calligrapher is choosy about brushes. (A poor workman blames his tools.)

A riddle is a word game involving two people, the questioner and the answerer. The question embodies only the outer meaning and it is up to the answering person to discover the inner meaning. Divining the inner meaning is both easy and not easy. But not all riddles yield up their inner meanings with equal ease. Hence, the riddle creates a battle of wits between the questioner and answerer. Not only does a lack of imagination make it difficult to answer the riddle but the question can also be intentionally designed to confuse the answerer and send him off on an inappropriate direction. A good example would be, 'Who is the person who has three bells (sejong)?' The answer is 'King Sejong.'

Although riddles are as old as language, the earliest documented evidence in Korea dates back to the reign of King Soji (r. 479-500). According to the Memoralilia_of_the_Three_Kingdoms, an old man emerged from the midst of a pond and presented a sealed letter that was brought to the king. On the envelope was written, 'If opened, two people will die; if not opened one person will die.' The court astrologer solved the riddle, saying, 'The two people are commoners but the one person is Your Majesty.' When the king opened the envelope, he found a message reading, 'Shoot an arrow into the harp-case.' He did so and, inside, found the dead bodies of his queen and a monk, who had been fornicating.

A major contributor over the years to the study of Korean riddles has been Ch'oe Sangsu, who has edited Korean_Riddle_Dictionary (Choson susukkekki sajon; 1948) with more than 4 000 entries and Korean_Riddles (Han'guk gi susukkekki; 1973) with some 1 400 entries. Another major source - bearing the same title - is Korean_Riddles (Han'guk gi susukkekki; 1973) by Yi Chongch'ul with about 2 000 riddles listed. A North Korean source is the 1 335-entry Collected_Riddles (susukkekki chip; 1986), edited by Pak Yongsun.

A Sampler of Korean Riddles

What lives without a body and talks without a mouth? (The wind)
What do ten people pull but five people enter? (Five pairs of stockings)
What is sweeter than honey and more powerful than a lion? (Sleep)
What talks without a mouth and hears without ears? (A telephone)
What waits when empty and walks when full? (Shoes)
What has no tongue but always tells the truth? (A mirror)
What has four legs but can't walk? (A table)

2. Story: Myth, Legend, Folktales

Myth is the legacy of deepest antiquity. At a time when the earliest political entities were just beginning to emerge on the Korean peninsula but they had not yet acquired the structure of states, the age of myth was in its last phase. Such nation-founding myths as the stories of Tan'gun, Chumong, Hyokkôse, Suro, and the three founders of Cheju Island are not the first myths. Before nation-founding myths took shape, there were originally myths associated with each social entity. Then, as tribes and clans federated into states and states into nations, there was a need to contend with outside powers and inspire a national spirit; therefore, at this point certain of the original myths were expanded to serve as a nation-founding mythology of an entire people, like the Tan'gun myth.

Tan'gun, the Founder of Old Choson
In ancient times God, whose name was Hwanin, had a young son whose name was Hwanung. The boy wished to descend from heaven and live in the human world. His father, after examining three great mountains, chose T'aebaek Mountain as a suitable place for his heavenly son to bring happiness to human beings. He gave Hwanung three heavenly treasures, and commanded him to rule over his people.

With three thousand of his loyal subjects Hwanung descended from heaven and appeared under a sandalwood tree on T'aebaek Mountain. He named the place City of God and assumed the title of Heavenly King Hwanung. He led his ministers of wind, rain and clouds in teaching the people more than 360 useful arts, including agriculture and medicine, inculcated moral principles and imposed a code of law.

In those days there lived a bear and a tiger in the same cave. They prayed to Hwanung to be blessed with incarnation as human beings. The king took pity on them and gave them each a bunch of mugwort and twenty pieces of garlic, saying, "If you eat this holy food and do not see the sunlight for one hundred days, you will become human beings."

The bear and the tiger took the food and ate it, and retired into the cave. In twenty-one days the bear, who had faithfully observed the king's instructions, became a woman. But the tiger, who had disobeyed, remained in its original form.

But the bear-turned-woman could find no husband, so she prayed under the sandalwood tree to be blessed with a child. Hwanung heard her prayers and married her. She conceived and bore a son called Tan'gun, who later went to P'yŏngyang, set up his royal residence, and bestowed the name Chosŏn upon his kingdom.

There are also shaman myths, village myths, and family myths. The shaman myth is a long story orally transmitted as a narrative shaman song or as a 'spirit's history' (pon_p'uri). The style of its transmission suggests the maintenance of a very old form and the content has various features in common with ancient nation-founding myths. A village myth is the history of a spirit worshiped in that village. Except for the fact that the protagonist is a village spirit, these stories are made nearly the same as legends. As an example of a family myth there is the story of the family progenitor whose mysterious activities are described in the introduction to a family's genealogy.

Legends, generally speaking, can be divided into legends about people and legends about material objects. The legend, whether human legend or material legend, usually has a historical nature to some extent. The characters are frequently historical personages, kings, ministers or some famous person of a given locality. A legend is also something that is frequently thought to be history, whether by the teller or listener.

The folktale is a story that is meant to be heard with amusement and a characteristic is the fact that the protagonist is easily victorious in his confrontation with the world. Although the legend has a historical nature to it, this is not so of the folktale. The folktale begins, 'Long, long ago there lived a certain man...'. Not only are the characters not specific persons but the time and place are vague.

The folktale is largely divided into three types: animal tales; ordinary tales, and jest or anecdote. The first and last are short stories with simple structures and the middle type is a long story with a complicated structure.

In the ordinary tale the protagonist is a common human being who encounters what at first looks like an utterly insurmountable obstacle but, due to unexpected good fortune, he is able to prevail. Although this type does not necessarily always lead to a happy ending, it does not end in a tragic defeat like we can see in the legend. One might claim that a story
like the tale of Pyŏlsuni and Talsuni is sad, but they do prevail in the end. A tiger grabs and devours the mother and then it sets about devouring her children as well. But the children are not caught and devoured. A heavy rope descends from the sky and they are rescued.

3. Song: Folksong, Kut Song, P'ansori Song

While the shaman kut (ritual) song is sung by a shaman and p'ansori by a kwangdae, the folksong is sung by ordinary people. Not only is it sung by ordinary people but it is deeply connected with the tasks and events of daily life. The folksong takes a general song form while the other two use specialized forms. While one can hear the folksong everywhere, the other two are restricted as to time and place. Both kut song and p'ansori have incorporated much from the folksong.

Folksongs can be classified according to their functions: There are labour songs sung while working and ritual songs sung while performing ceremonies. In the sense that these songs carry out a fixed function they could be called 'functional songs'.

Among functional songs the most fundamental is the labour song. If one sings a song while working, the task can be more pleasant. The labour song uses words needed for the task at hand and, while expressing the feelings of the workers, can weave a story in song to relieve the tedium of repetitive work. The folksongs that men sing while performing heavy labour are comparatively simple and the folksongs that women sing while performing chores like weaving are comparatively wordy and complicated.

Labour songs can be classified according to the type of labour. Agricultural labour songs are sung while pulling up seedling rice, transplanting rice seedlings, weeding a rice paddy, threshing barley, tilling a dry field, or weeding a dry field. Fishing labour songs are associated with such activities as pulling an oar, drawing in nets, and the work of diving women. Songs for sundry tasks include songs for carrying shared loads, cutting grass, cutting fodder or kindling, working a grain mill, and lullabies. Weaving songs are sung while twining thread, spinning, or working a loom.

Types of the ritual song are not plentiful. Though there may have been more in the past, present-day field research has turned up only a few clear types like the exorcistic 'Stamping Down the Earth Demons', bier-carrying dirges, and gravesite earth-tamping songs. The first is a type that belongs to songs sung at periodic observances and the other two are associated with rites of passage.

Folksongs can also be classified according to the singer: men's songs, women's songs, and children's songs. The distinction between men's and women's songs is particularly clear in the case of their functional songs. But there are some regions where the rice seedling transplanting song is sung by both men and women, taking turns. Women's songs are not only more abundant than men's songs but they also have greater variety in content. Narrative folksongs that tell a story are sung mostly by women. Children's songs are unique in that they are orally transmitted only by children. It is common for these songs to be associated with some game or play, instead of standing alone. The content is typically very simple.

There are a great many songs and variants among folksongs and the full picture of the form is difficult to ascertain. The largest collection of folksongs to date is Im Tonggwŏn's seven-volume Collected Korean Folksongs (Hanguk minyo chip; 1961-92) but much more awaits collection and sorting than has been gathered so far.

The kut song - that is, a shaman song - is an essential of the shaman ritual or kut. There are several kinds of shaman but only the hereditary shaman really knows the shaman songs
well. Regions where shaman songs are particularly abundant include Hamgyong, P'yongan, Kyonggi (including Seoul), the eastern coastal region from Kangnûng to Pusan, and the island of Cheju.

Shaman songs must be seen in terms of how they fit into shaman kut ritual. In general, shaman kut are divided into a sequence of four events: invoking the spirit, questioning and answering the spirit, entertaining the spirit, and telling the spirit's history. For each event there are songs and dances. And there is also speech that is not sung. Among these events, the one that is most important for its songs is the one in which the shaman conveys the spirit's life story. This song about the spirit's history, presented as a long narrative, is called pon p'uri, after the term used on Cheju Island.

We have already mentioned the pon p'uri in connection with myth since much of its content is mythic. But the spirit who is the subject of the pon p'uri, rather than being so mythically sublime and noble that it is difficult for humans to draw close, exudes an aura of intimacy toward common human beings. Like them, the spirit is poor, humble, and despised. Hence he suffers and overcomes hardship in a process that is reminiscent of what was seen in ancient myth. There is no lack of such songs that use this heroic life pattern, such as the two representative pon p'uri: 'The Maiden Tanggûm' (Tanggûm aegi) and 'Princess Pari' (Pari_kongju).

'The Maiden Tanggûm': Sung as part of a kut for the Chesok Deity or for domestic exorcism. Distributed nationwide. The story of a woman who is impregnated by a monk and suffers persecution from her parents. This woman and her three children all become shaman deities.

'Princess Pari': Sung as part of an ogu_kut, which is performed when a person dies. Distributed in such locales as Seoul and provinces of Hamgyong, Kyongsang, and Cholla. In this story, the heroine, cast out because she was born the seventh princess, later goes to the Other World and brings back medicinal water to revive her father the king. The heroine, Princess Pari, is a shaman deity who resurrects dead people and guides dead people to a comfortable place of repose.

Since the kut song is performed in the course of a kut ritual, the form is represented by limited materials. We can catch a glimpse of the general shape of the kut song by reference to Kim T'aegon’s four-volume Collected Korean Shaman Songs (Hanguk_muga_chip, 1979-80).

It is thought that p'ansori was derived from pon p'uri. While it is a characteristic of p'ansori that the singer weaves his song around changes in rhythmic cycles, such cycles and patterns of change are also found in pon p'uri of the Cholla Province area. Whereas pon p'uri takes a shaman deity as its protagonist and tells us a story of travel to and from transcendental worlds, p'ansori deals with ordeals encountered in reality by common mortals. It is believed that p'ansori was first introduced at the end of the seventeenth c. or beginning of the eighteenth by singers from the shaman milieu in Cholla Province, including the husbands of shamans.

P'ansori was sung by a professional singer who is called a kwangdae. The p'ansori kwangdae would travel about and launch into a performance wherever he found a paying audience, whether in the cities or the countryside. He sang not only for aristocratic audiences but also for lower class people gathered in the marketplace. Since p'ansori had to satisfy the demands of such a variety of audiences, its content differed from earlier oral traditions in which the singer sang simply for his own individual amusement. While p'ansori stressed Confucian ethics and morals to please the tastes of aristocratic audiences, it also criticised the ruling order and called for human freedoms as demanded by low class audiences.
It is said that p’ansori originally had a repertoire of twelve works but only five of them have survived. The three songs most performed today are the songs of Ch’unhyang, Shim Ch’ông, and Hiingbu. The ‘Song of Ch’unhyang’ on the surface presents a Confucian virtuous woman but within is hidden the expression of the desire to break free of constraints based upon social status; the ‘Song of Shim Ch’ông’ praises the behaviour of a filial daughter but, at the same time, criticizes Confucian ethics; and, while the ‘Song of Hiingbu’ emphasizes brotherly love, it also shows that social changes were shaking the moral order from its foundation.

4. Nori : Shaman Kut Nori, Puppet Play, Mask Drama

Shaman kut nori is a play performed by a shaman when carrying out a kut. When the shaman sings the songs of a kut, she also performs dances and makes gestures. But simply singing, dancing, and gesturing alone are not called kut nori. Kut nori is drama, for the shaman becomes one of the characters in the drama and, establishing other characters to play opposite, she advances the plot through the give and take of dialogue. A shaman kut nori can be performed by a single shaman, working alone. The one shaman not only alternates among the roles of the various characters but also will select a member of the audience to play an opposite role from where he sits.

The puppet play (kkoktu kakshi norūm) was performed by members of sadang troupes of itinerant entertainers. These sandang troupes - lowest of all the low class entertainers - made a living by selling their talents, among which was the performance of puppet plays. The word kkoktu kakshi is the name of one of the characters in the play and is also used to desigate the puppets in general. Only one puppet play, ‘Kkoktu kakshi’, has survived.

Kkoktu kakshi is the shabby-looking old female protagonist and her husband is Pak Ch’omji, who also keeps appearing on the stage to explain the action of the play. In order to present his explanation, Pak Ch’omji trades dialogue with the musicians who are playing accompaniment for the puppet play. In effect, the musicians are participating in action of the play from the point of view of the audience. Involvement of the audience can be seen throughout shaman kut nori, puppet play, and mask dance and, among these, it has a particularly important role in the puppet play.

Mask drama was performed at first by farmers’ bands in rural villages. Originally, when villagers performed an annual kut to ensure good farming, one part of the farmers’ band that was responsible for the kut would put on masks and satirize the aristocracy. While mask drama, therefore, was at first one part of the village kut, it gradually became an independent drama and, as commercial centres developed in the late Choson period, a distinct urban mask drama emerged that was unlike village mask drama.

Mask dramas, wherever found, share common themes to a certain extent. An old monk called Nojang is brought on stage and used to criticize ways of thinking based on concepts that are out of touch with reality; the aristocracy is satirized; and, as the old man and old woman fight, we are shown an example of male tyranny. In widely scattered regions, mask drama shares such typical examples of the Korean population as the apostate old monk and the servant Ch’wibari, and the feckless aristocrat and the servant Malttugi.

Marshall R. Pihl

Twentieth Century Korean Poetry *

Modern Korean literature has been deeply influenced by two related constellations of events. The first was the Japanese occupation of Korea in 1910, a colonial regime lasting until Korea’s Liberation in 1945 at the end of World War Two. Immediately following
Liberation, Korea was partitioned at its 38th parallel between the United States and the
Soviet Union, an action originally intended to establish temporary zones for the two sides
to accept the regional surrender of Japanese forces. In his two-volume study on the origins
of the Korean War, historian Bruce Cumings has argued that the social and cultural
dislocations caused by the Japanese occupation linked with the political division between
the regimes in the north and south to create the explosively unstable situation of 1945-1950,
when more than 100 000 Korean people died in clashes between Left and Right. In 1950, a
civil war broke out between the northern and southern regimes, eventually drawing the two
major powers as well as a host of other participants - notably including the People’s
Republic of China - into its wake. Though the war was suspended in 1953, the temporary
division became long-term as Cold War rivalries prolonged the confrontation in Korea
between the Western powers.

The continued structural division of Korea became one of the major concerns of an
influential group of writers in the 1980s. Coupled with the repeated invocation of the North
Korean threat, the division also provided the handiest rationale during the Park Chung Hee
(1961-1979) and Chun Doo Hwan (1980-1988) regimes for severe repression of political
dissent and of literature that in any way articulated it. Only in the relatively recent past, the
first years of the decade of the 1990s, has reunification lost its taboo status as a subject, and
come to be seen less as the (hidden) object of writing than an accepted premise.

The Japanese occupation of Korea has also exerted its influence on the post-1950 writing
scene in a number of ways, both direct and indirect. First and most obviously, the
Japanese repressed and then imposed an outright ban on literary or other expression in the
Korean language. Nationalists who removed themselves from Korea, or who stayed and
wrote in Korea until it was no longer possible and then still kept on, are heroes in the
cultural histories of the period. Many other writers accommodated, some completely,
others to a few lesser degree. The former - writers like the pioneers Yi Kwangsu and Ch'oe
Namsón - were vilified during the post-Liberation period, but recently have been offered
some degree of literary and ideological rehabilitation.

* This section on modern poetry is a revised version of the author's 'Fault Lines : Modern Korean Poetry',

The latter, writers who cooperated with the Japanese in less obvious ways, continue to
occupy a supremely tendentious zone in Korea’s history. A scandal broke out in 1986, for
example, with the publication of the first two volumes of Selections of Pro-Japanese
Literary Works, among which are essays, poems, and other materials by a number of
prominent writers in the South Korean literary world.

As an instance of foreign economic and political power exercised in Korea, the Japanese
occupation evokes bitter memories, but also raises questions about the so-called Western
democratic powers for their evident neglect, even collusion, at Korea’s status as an
occupied territory. The United States did not discourage Japan’s moves leading toward the
1910 occupation, and failed to respond in any significant way in 1919 to the March First
Korean Independence Movement, even though the events of 1919 clearly were intended as
a Korean response to President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points. The United States did
respond to South Korea’s perilous situation in 1950, and for decades after the Korean War,
the sense of appreciation for the American intervention was palpable nearly everywhere in
the south. More recently, though, it has been noticed in the south that the United States
was the initial instigator of the 1945 division; that the U.S. commitment of troops in 1950
was at least as much motivated by anxiety about the supposed Red menace as by concern
for the people of (South) Korea; and that lingering American implication in the Cold War
was a factor in the continuing division. In 1980, when the citizens of Kwangju, a city in the
southwestern part of Korea, were brutally assaulted by Korean government troops, the
United States not only failed to intervene, but seemed to have given at least tacit approval to
the detailing of the troops to Kwangju.
Such political issues have formed a significant strand in Korean literature throughout this century, one that shapes a reading of even the most 'aesthetic' or purely literary works, and gives a pejorative sense to the term *sunsup’a*, the pure literary school as contrasted with the *ch’amy6p’a*, or commitment group, writers who have engaged in their works the social issues of the decades of the 1970s and 1980s. The political implications of the division of Korea spill over into the assumption that when one speaks of Korean literature, one normally means either literature written in Korea prior to the 1945 division, or literary works written in South Korea in the years since. Until just a few years ago, South Korea had banned the publication not only of works by North Korean writers - that is, citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea - but even those who wrote and published prior to 1945 but then, for whatever reason, whether freely or not, 'went north.' North Korean literature is almost universally excluded in discussions of 'Korean literature' in South Korea, and in the West. At the same time, it must be noted that in the twentieth c. Korean literature has also shown a full range of engagements with other matters entirely, as well as a cosmopolitan awareness and appreciation of other writers in other countries, including Japan. This is to suggest that there is both far more and less to Korean literature than its conflicted politics.

Korean Poetry to 1945

From the first decade of the century, Ch’oe Namsôn’s (1879-1961) poem ‘From the Sea to Children’ (*Hae eges6 sony6n ege*) stands out in the literary histories as the first modern poem. Ch’oe published the poem in 1908 in the premier issue of the journal he had just started publishing, *Youth* (*Sony6n*). With rather heavy didactic force, the poem articulated its author’s hope to inspire the younger generations of Korea to take up the challenges of the modern age. The first and last stanzas will give a sense of the poem’s structure and tone, in several respects reminiscent of the 'Song of the Flying Dragons'.

I
Ch’6ls6k , ch’6ls6k , ch’6k , sswa-a .
Rolling, smash, demolish.
Mountains high as T’aesan, rocks huge as houses,
What are they to me, what are they?
Know you my strength? Or do you not? Roaring out,
Rolling, smash, demolish.
*Ch’6ls6k , ch’6ls6k , ch’6k , t’y6r6rung, kwak .*

VI
Ch’6ls6k , ch’6ls6k , ch’6k , sswa-a .
There on earth, the people;
I despise them all. The only ones I love,
Full of courage, the pure-hearted children.
Come then, sweetly to my arms and be embraced.
Come and let me kiss you.
*Ch’6ls6k , ch’6ls6k , ch’6k , t’y6r6rung, kwak .*

Following the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910, the literary as well as the political and social modernization movements were engulfed by the Japanese efforts to assimilate, or erase, Korean culture. Still, writers such as the pioneering novelist Yi Kwangsu, whose 1917 'new novel', *The Heartless* (*Muj6ng*), articulated a vision of modern enlightenment thought leading to the rebirth of Korean national energies, continued to grapple with the doubled challenges of creating a modern, Korean literature even as Japan's policies seemed to block the very idea of a Korean nation and culture. Chu Yohan’s 'Fire Play', published in 1918, is cited as the first free-verse poem, while Kim sOk’s experiments with traditional
rhythmic and thematic elements, as well as his translations of a broad range of European poetry, excited great interest in the Korean literary world.

In 1919, in direct response to Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points, especially the principle of national self-determination, Ch’oe Namson, in consultation with Yi Kwangsu and other leaders, drafted a Declaration of Korean Independence, which was read at Pagoda Park in Seoul on March First. The independence movement spread rapidly throughout the country, despite the concerted and violent efforts of the Japanese government-general to suppress it. But the international community failed to respond, in part because of the difficult negotiations then underway at Versailles to settle the end of World War I, and in part because of American interests in having Japan as a balance to Russian ambitions in Asia.

The Japanese government did alter its policies for a time, however, easing an array of the publishing restrictions, among others. As a result, the decade of the 1920s became a true Renaissance of Korean literature. Poets such as Sowol (his sobriquet), Kim Chŏngshik (1902–1934) and Manhae, Han Yongun (1879–1944) exploited both Korean and other resources in recreating a Korean literature. Sowol’s famous poem 'Azaleas', published in his only book of poems in 1925, expresses a wistful melancholy to those who read it as a love poem. It echoes a poem by William Butler Yeats, 'He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven', for those who have read the Irish poet’s work. Like Yeats, Sowol deploys in his poem a traditional diction and rhythm that evoke the Korean cultural past, like the Irish Romantic past of Yeats's early work.

'Azaleas'

When you go away,  
weary of me,  
without a word, gently I shall let you go.

I shall gather  
the beautiful azaleas of Yongbyŏn and Yaksan  
and scatter them on your path.

Step by step  
on the flowers placed before you  
tread softly, just lightly, and go.

When you go away,  
weary of me,  
though I die I shall not shed a tear.

Sowol’s melancholic tone was read in the 1960s and 1970s in South Korea as an expression of the Korean national sense of sadness at the Japanese occupation. In the 1980s, a time of intense political concern about literature as a result of the Kwangju uprising and massacre of 1980, Sowol was criticized for having a decadent, sentimentally escapist outlook. Sowol’s poems can now be read with a less politically mediated sense of appreciation for the language and imagery of the works, but also in the case of 'Azaleas', with an ironic awareness of the convergence of the site of those azaleas with the location of one of the major North Korean nuclear reactors.

Manhae, Han Yongun directly and actively took part in a number of areas in the Korean nationalist movement. Among other things, he briefly joined the so-called 'Righteous Armies' in the 1890s in their guerilla campaign against the Japanese intruders. He became a leader of the Korean Buddhist community during the 'teens, publishing a widely read essay on the revitalization of Korean Buddhism. In 1919 he was chosen to represent the
Buddhists in signing the Declaration of Independence, and wrote three codicils on non-violent protest. Following his arrest and brief imprisonment for participating in the movement, he published his one collection of poems in Korean (he wrote another collection of Chinese poems during his imprisonment) called The Silence of Love (Nimůi ch'immuk) in 1926. Written in a densely allusive style influenced by his reading of Rabindranath Tagore's poems, on the one hand, and by the Buddhist scriptures on the other, the sequence of sixty-eight poems circles round and provokes the memory of the absent loved one, the nim of the book's title. From one poem to the next, the voice of the poems may be a woman's or a man's, and for a number of the poems the subject may be read as a person, as the Korean nation or people, or the Buddha, or the contradictory, rhetorical centre of a self-reflexive, recursive style of prose-poem. Manhae's 'Ferryboat and Traveller' evokes the image of the traveller, one that later poets used frequently, in the landscape of what might be colonial Korea; the ferryboat may be read as 'Korea'. The term for the traveller, haengin, also refers to a person entering Buddhist practice, while the ferryboat is a symbol for the scriptures. Finally, the poem can also be read as simply being constructed around the subject of itself.

'Ferryboat and Traveller'

I am the ferryboat
You are the traveller.

You step on me with muddy feet.
Holding you, I cross over the waters.
Holding you, I cross over the depths, the shallows, the steepest rapids.

If by chance you do not come I wait for you, night until day,
exposed to the winds, the snow and the rain.
When you cross the water you do not look back on me but just go on.
But I know that you are always about to come.
Waiting for you, day after day I go on wearing older.

I am the ferryboat
you are the traveller.

Despite the increasingly severe restrictions placed upon Korea during the decades of the 1930s and 1940s, Korean writers continued to pursue their craft. The poet, short story writer, essayist Bohemian Dadaist architect tea-house owner Yi Sang (1910-1937), in being the most unusual of Korea's writers then and, in the estimation of many readers, since, can be viewed as the most representative. His novella 'Wings' (Nalga) published less than one year before his death, combines the literary device of the naive narrator - a man who refuses to realize that his wife is a prostitute - with a remarkably avant garde literary style, filled with numerous references to the cultural products of the west, and constantly doubling and redoubling back upon itself in an infinitely regressive process of introspection. The narrator, as the story progresses, comes to resemble Ch'ŏyong, or a modern, urban version of him, even to the moment when he stumbles into his wife's room as she is entertaining a client:

No sooner had I got home than I discovered my wife had a guest. I was cold and wet and, in the confusion, forgot to knock. I witnessed a scene that my wife would have liked me not to. With drenched feet I strode across her room and reached mine. Casting off my dripping garments, I covered myself with a quilt. I kept on shivering; the cold became intense. I felt as if the floor under me were sinking. I lost consciousness.

Translated by Peter H. Lee
The narrator becomes sick, and in a reversal of Ch’öyong’s story, his wife nurses him with sleeping pills, rather than cold medicine. Commentators on the story have suggested a correspondence between the narrator’s psychic paralysis and the colonized mentality of those who were living in Korea at the time. Yi Sang’s poems display a similar combination of intense focus, an almost architectural use of language to create and shape space on the ground of the page, and in those poems which do have some comprehensible story, a double-reflected sense of the absence of the poet’s self. Two examples are ‘Diagnosis’ from Yi Sang’s ‘Crow’s Eye View’, a long, proto-post-modernist poem which caused a sensation in the Korean literary world as it was published in serial form in the Chosôn Central News in 1934, and ‘Mirror’, published in that same year in Catholic Youth. The first is given in the original, since to translate it would invade the architecture of the poem for no gain.

‘Diagnosis’ (from ‘Crow’s Eye View’)

October 26, 1931

Yi Sang (Doctor on Duty)

‘Mirror’

There is no sound in the mirror; no other world is so still.

In the mirror I do have ears, two pitiful ears that cannot hear what I say.

The I of the mirror is a lefty, awkward left-hander who doesn’t know how to shake my hand.

Because of the mirror I cannot touch the I of the mirror, but without the mirror how could we ever have met?

I don’t have a mirror with me now but in the mirror there is always the I of the mirror, busy, I suppose, somewhere with his lonely work.

The I of the mirror is just the opposite of me and still is just the same.
I worry about the I of the mirror and feel sad that I cannot conduct a proper examination.

The frustrated diagnostic impulse of the poem sounds an eerily close echo of the ritual core of Ch'ŏnyong's song.

Post-Division, Post-War Korean Literature

For an interval during and immediately after the Korean War, a number of writers grappled either wishfully or realistically with the challenge to national identity, and the vast devastation, caused by a war that quite literally decimated the population of thirty million Korean people. Several prominent writers who 'went north' were dropped from the South Korean literary realm, officially ignored, or worse. The case of Lee In-Soo is a representative, if horrific, example. Educated in Korea, Japan, and England, a truly masterful translator of modern Korean poetry, Lee was 're-captured' by South Korean troops after the cease-fire in 1953, put through a hasty trial on charges of treason, and despite extensive and vigorous protests from the international community, summarily executed by the South Korean government.

The 1950s also saw a return to the modernist experiments of the 1930s most notably started by Yi Sang. The poet Kim Suyŏng (1921-1968) was one of the most influential of the neo-modernists, a group known as the 'Latter Half'. Other writers pursued a more lyrical, traditional poetic practice - notably the poet Sŏ Chŏngju, whose passionate, intense poems continue to inspire and exasperate other writers. Sŏ's 'Beside a Chrysanthemum' (Kukhwaya yŏp'eso), has been learned by several generations of school children in Korea.

'Beside a Chrysanthemum'

To bring one chrysanthemum
to flower, the cuckoo has cried
since spring.

To bring one chrysanthemum to bloom,
thunder has rolled
through the black clouds.

Flower, like my sister returning
from distant, youthful byways
of throat-tight longing
to stand by this mirror:

for your yellow petals to open,
last night such a frost fell,
and I did not sleep.

The 1960s and 1970s were defined by the increasingly heavy-handed measures of the repressive Park Chung Hee regime, and the concomitantly serious focus in Korean literary works upon social and political issues. Kim Suyŏng came to be even more widely recognized as one of Korea's leading modern poets, and his death in 1968, run down by a bus in the before-curfew rush, was a tragic and ironic urban waste. He was at the time one of Korea's most accomplished and paradoxically most promising writers.

Among those who count themselves as descendants of Kim Suyŏng are the political satirist Kim Chiha, and the rural-urban genre-scene poet Shin Kyŏngnim. Shin and other writers and critics were associated at the time with the influential journal, Creation and Criticism.
The 1970s and 1980s, with rapid industrial and economic growth locked in the close embrace of a series of repressive political regimes, seemed to call forth a large number of outright protest poets, such as the former Buddhist monk Ko Un, Kim Chiha, and such metaphorical dissenters as Hwang Tonggyu and Chong Hyŏnjŏng.

The National Literature Movement was organized in the 1980s to refocus effort and attention on the issue that many writers and others believed was the single, defining aspect of Korea's national political life - the continuing division of the country. Many of the writers and critics associated with the movement had come together before in the offices and pages of Creation and Criticism. There have been such bizarre moments in the group's history as the expulsion of Kim Chiha for his urging students not to kill themselves in their anti-government protests, and the even more bizarre twist when the poet protested in turn that he had not known he was a member of the organization in the first place. Nevertheless, the organization has had a profound influence in Korea's literary history, as it marked a point when writers took action as a polity rather than isolated individuals or groups of individuals.

As it drew away from the Kwangju Uprising of 1980, the decade marked a period when writers took unambiguous stands on politics and human rights issues, many against the then current government of Chun Doo Hwan, and a few in support. The latter, or those who simply refused to speak out, were subjected to severe criticism and threats.

Many new voices and subjects began to appear, in the latter years of the 1980s, in writing about the world of the labouring class, then works by the labouring class, especially the poet Pak Nohae, whose Dawn of Labour reached a very wide audience in the late 1980s; in works by and about women; and in works from and about Kwangju. With the substantial changes in the domestic political climate in South Korea giving freer reign to the forces of a voracious reading market, poetry, stories, essays, confessional literature, and novels have flooded from the publishing houses. It can be argued that the variety in all its myriad facets had been a constant presence during this century, though confined by the tectonics of the Japanese occupation and the political division. The tremendous release that has happened in South Korea, and may also, at some time, in the north, is perfectly captured in one of Ko Un's most gloriously political poems, 'Great Springtime':

Warm east winds blow,  
the earth is melting.  
It's a sight to open  
the eyes of the blind.  
Kids are clustering  
close like chicks,  
underground insects  
are wriggling restless too.  
Just look! The fish rising  
from deeper water  
are using their backs  
to break the ice!  
How on earth  
can heaven keep silent?  
The wild goose fathers  
are leading their broods  
away towards the Sungari River.  
Now in this land  
wonders are happening.  
One great springtime is coming!  

Tr. by YM Kim and Brother Anthony of Taizé
Barely one century has passed since the first serialized fiction began to appear in late nineteenth-c. Korean newspapers, heralding the emergence of a literature sufficiently unlike what had preceded it and also new enough in content to be called 'modern' in the Western European sense. The unfolding of Korean literature over this reach of time is commonly divided into three main stages, each linked to certain distinct changes in social conditions. The literature of the period from the end of the nineteenth c. through the early years of the twentieth c., frequently called 'enlightenment literature', constitutes the first of these stages. The second stage is the literature of the Japanese colonial period, running from the early to the middle twentieth c. Post-Liberation literature, divided into that of the North and of the South and coinciding with the second half of this century, makes up the third stage.

The most dramatic changes in Modern Korean literature took place over a comparatively short period - the quarter century between the Kabo Reforms of 1894-96 and the independence demonstrations of 1919. These changes were undertaken mostly by a small, elite, and homogeneous class of early modern intellectuals and, for that very reason, could proceed apace.

In the early years of the twentieth c., much material was translated from Chinese, Japanese and other foreign languages into Korean and published in Korea. But, at the same time, modernized expression was also evolving in original Korean composition, as seen in early newspapers, magazines, and books.

Enlightenment literature gave way to colonial literature in the early 1920s after the tumultuous, anti-Japanese March First Movement of 1919 had altered the consciousness of the Korean people and Japan's new Cultural Policy had permitted the opening of several private Korean-language newspapers and magazines for the first time in more than a decade.

In addition to the realism introduced in 1919 by the coterie magazine Creation (Ch'angjo) edited by the pioneer Kim Tongin and his friends, there emerged the socialist writing of a generation of young students who had been educated in Japan, where they encountered a wave of European thought that was not well known back home. In 1925 they formed the Korea Artista Proleta Federatio (KAPF), and until May 1935, when KAPF was closed down by the authorities, socialist writers added a fresh intellectual edge to Korean writing, although they ultimately failed to contribute many works of lasting importance to literary history.

The 1930s introduced a growing Japanese suppression that drove many writers away from the here-and-now as a subject. This decade witnessed a maturation in modern Korean literature within which the giants of the post-Liberation literary establishment, such as Ch'ae Manshik, Kim Tongni, and Hwang Sunwŏn, serve their apprenticeships.

The most ironic yet formative experience of the twentieth c. for Korean literature began with Liberation on 15 August 1945. Koreans regained a country that had been lost to Japanese imperialism only to lose it again to Russian and American imperialism. What has remained since then are two distortions of Korea - a 'North' and a 'South' - which have been further deformed by war and industrialization. In Korean, the 1945 Liberation is called Kwangbok, 'Glorious Recovery', but it was neither glorious nor a recovery and, worse, it was capped by an internecine war of horrifically compressed violence that spared no corner of the country. Of the Koreans who survived, ten million today remain separated from members of their families by the impassable truce-line. These events have so informed contemporary Korean literature in one way or another that some critics define literature since 1945 as the 'Literature of an Age of Division'.
The immediate post-Liberation period - the literary void of 1945-50 - was an ordeal for Korean writers. Pro-Japanese collaborators were being singled out and ostracized, while the decades-old division between left and right - quiescent during the latter days of colonial suppression - asserted itself again as literary groups formed, split, and merged. The rightist administrations of the U.S. Army Military Government in Korea and, later, Syngman Rhee, contributed to an increasingly hostile environment for the left. Ideological strife tore the literary world apart, and its ranks were significantly thinned as about one-third of Korea's writers - more than one hundred - migrated to the North by the early 1950s. At the same time some writers also moved to the South, but it appears that, for each writer who went South, three southerners went North. We have managed to learn something of the fate of literature in the North through fiction carried in official publications issued in P'yongyang and available outside the Korean peninsula. A discussion of the North Korean short story appears below.

Although no literature worthy of note was produced in the South during the hectic five years of political confrontation between left and right that followed Liberation, the terrible experience of the 1950-53 war demanded, and got, a response from the literary establishment. While many writers, retreating from ugly reality, resurrected the pastoral idylls of the 1930s, some postwar writers tried to deal more directly, though distantly, with the awful world around them.

Mature craftsmen, schooled in the 1930s and tested in war, towered over the literary establishment at about this time, relinquishing their position only when displaced in the 1970s by a new generation that knew nothing of the colonial experience and were only toddlers during the Korean War.

Halfway through the second stage of South Korean literature since Liberation, while the old masters still dominated the scene, thousands of Korean students - elementary, middle, high school, and college - managed something their elders had long been unable to accomplish. Enraged by blatant political malfeasance and fired by the news that police had killed a boy in Masan with a tear gas canister fired at close range, students converged on major cities and downtown Seoul in massive street demonstrations that finally pulled down the deeply corrupt, authoritarian regime of the Liberal Party under President Syngman Rhee. This was a seminal event for modern Korean culture, society, economy, and politics, for it unleashed a new generation upon the scene, one that now leads in every walk of Korean life.

Though a decade older than this new generation, writer Ch'oe Inhun (b.1936) was the first to break the taboo on discussion of the war in creative literature with his novel The_Square, published in November 1960. His work takes the then popular victim's view of the war as having been caused by external forces, which contrasts with treatments of two decades later that began to suggest the war was the inevitable result of internal historical factors.

Ch'oe Inhun's taboo-breaking novel notwithstanding, a more significant breakthrough occurred in modern South Korean fiction when one of the April 19th Generation, Kim Sūngok (b.1941), published his landmark short story 'Seoul, 1964: Winter', marking the beginning of the third stage of Literature in the age of division.

'Seoul, 1964: Winter' is a bellwether of Kim Sūngok's generation. His youthful, modern vocabulary of high-frequency words is notable for its distinct and explicit quality and concomitant rare use of the sensory vocabulary that had been an essential attribute of creative writing since the colonial period.

Although Kim Sūngok faded after publishing comparatively few works, the crack he made in conventional literary perceptions was torn wide open in the 1970s as other members of his generation followed his lead. Notable among them is Ch'oe Inho (b. 1945). An ironic and witty writer, Ch'oe made his debut in the 1960s and has since become a huge
commercial success.

The decade of the 1970s, unique in Korean social and cultural history, was characterized by a rapid economic development that spawned social and regional discord, together with a political self-righteousness that invited ideological confrontation. Rural poverty increased as uprooted workers concentrated in the major cities, which were dominated by a burgeoning, materialistic bourgeoisie that sought to amuse itself in the context of commercial culture. At the same time, a national self-awareness began to take shape as part of an effort to surmount the discord and recover a sense of national wholeness. In response, Korean literature began to orient itself toward the new realities and, thus, take part in the cognitive task that faced the nation.

Cho Sehūi (b.1942) emerged as an important figure in South Korean fiction at this time. His *Small Ball Launched by a Dwarf* (*Nanjangi ka ssooollin chagūn kong;* 1978) is the most notable product of what is now called the 'literature of the 1970s.' It went through thirty-one printings in its first six years and continued to sell 20,000 copies yearly throughout the 1980s.

Cho's best-seller is a series of loosely-connected but realistically-interrelated stories. A fixed set of characters appears freely in the stories, revealing themselves in bits and snatches as Cho builds up the reality of their lives from the discontinuous fragments scattered throughout the work. These characters' lives run parallel, intersect, and collide, summoning up life in the rapidly industrializing Korea of the 1970s.

The many social changes spawned by rapid industrialization in the 1970s created new social forces that informed the literature of the 1980s. At this time, two events hit the country particularly hard, spurring literary responses. The assassination of President Park Chung Hee in October 1979 blew the lid off a pent-up social scene, leading to labour disputes, strikes, and massive demonstrations. These events culminated in the May 1980 civil uprising in the city of Kwangju which involved two hundred thousand people and was put down by military force at the cost of hundreds dead and thousands wounded. The trauma of the Kwangju Massacre had sufficient impact to colour the literature of a generation of young writers who were then in their twenties.

Early in the 1980s the repressive dictatorship of President Chun Doo Hwan clamped controls on writers by forcing the closure of their literary magazines. But, while the older writers, numbed by past events, were no longer as sensitive as they once had been, only a few younger writers were able to grasp the impact of the Kwangju Massacre on the general populace and the resulting changes in popular consciousness.

However, as new writers did appear, they produced work that fell into two major groupings, commonly referred to as 'literature of division' and 'literature of the people'. These dealt, respectively, with problems of the division of national territory and with social issues stemming from the dictatorship of a political elite. In contrast to Ch'oe Inhun's 1961 *The Square*, which treated the Korean War as a clash of superpowers, the literature of division of the 1980s began to consider the war as the inevitable result of internal historical forces, such as the class struggle of landlord and tenant. Cho Ch'ongnae essayed this approach in his 1981 novella, 'Land of Exile', and again, more forcefully, in his massive saga, *The Taebaek Mountains* (1983-89).

The new young mainstream novelists who emerged during the 1980s include Yi Insŏng, Yang Kwija, Im Ch'ŏru, and Ch'oe Such'ŏl - all born in the 1950s. In spite of their shared experiences of the 1980s and tendency to address larger societal issues (labourers, middle class, and social reform; political violence, national division, and the Kwangju Massacre) they nevertheless show considerable individual genius.
Yi Insŏng, well known for his 1983 short story collection, *Into a Unfamiliar Time*, is a writer who writes to change society. He enriches his work with careful research but also draws upon his own personal experience— which he heightens for artistic effect. Yang Kwija, on the other hand, writes in a simple but polished, classical style as she examines the alienation of a weary middle-class. A representative collection of her work is the 1985 *Deaf Bird*.

The work of Im Ch'ŏru, who was born in Kwangju, reveals spiritual scars of the 1980 massacre. The representative 'A Shared Journey', from his 1985 anthology *Beloved South*, exemplifies his uneasy but lyrical style, which projects a gloomy view of the world.

The most thematically wide-ranging of these four representative young writers of the 1980s is Ch'oe Such'ol, whose constantly shifting insights examine the failures in human relations, isolation of individuals, and psychological aspects of violence in society. A representative collection of his work, *Pavilion in the Air*, explores inner consciousness and psychology in an imaginary world of unreality.

Literature in the northern Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) developed very differently from that of South Korea. When leftist literary leaders from the southern half of Korea and intellectuals who spent the war years in exile in Yenan, China, flocked to the new regime in the North after Liberation, they discovered a situation quite unlike what they had anticipated. Major literary and intellectual leaders associated with the earlier proletarian school disappeared from sight in the course of a struggle for political control of the North between Kim II Sung's Soviet-oriented Korean Workers Party and the New People's party, whose leaders had spent the last years before Liberation with Mao Tsetung in Yenan.

The leader of the Yenan faction, Kim Tubong, an established literary scholar, was purged during the Korean War. Having eliminated not only non-communist nationalists and domestic communists soon after Liberation but also the Yenan faction by the end of the Korean War, Kim II Sung had a free hand to dictate cultural policy in line with his own anti-intellectual, party-first bias. Clearly impatient with possible criticism by intellectuals from within party ranks, as Mao had been in Yenan, Kim repeatedly expressed a distaste for literary workers as a professional group separate from the party and the people.

In terms which recall the Stalin-Zhdanov cultural policy in Soviet Russia of the 1930s, he characterized writers and artists as 'engineers of the human soul' and stressed that their works should serve the people as a 'powerful weapon and as a great inspiration'. He chided writers and artists for having 'lost touch with life' and 'lagging behind our rapidly advancing reality'. His basic theme was that the writers must serve the people and the party, acting as inspirational conveyors of information who help the readers learn from the 'lofty spirit of ordinary people'.

In November 1960 Kim II Sung announced the formation of a General Federation of Literature and Art, in which writers and other creative artists were to work collectively under the leadership and direct guidance of the party. By the 1970s, Kim appeared satisfied that his writers were under party control and successfully incorporated into the work of the state. Addressing the Fifth Congress of the Korean Workers Party, he reported, "Our literature and art have become the literature and art of the Party, of the revolution, and of the people in the truest sense of the term and are becoming a powerful means in educating our working people along communist lines."

North Korean fiction as it has evolved under party control is less a reflection of social reality than it is a statement of social ideals. There are no villains in North Korean fiction when the story is set in the present-day DPRK. The only inveterate villains are found among landlords and Japanese in stories set before Liberation or American and Korean officials in modern tales that take place in South Korea. In stories set in the DPRK, we find
no interpersonal conflicts involving true enmity but, rather, solvable misunderstandings, such as those between faithful believers and back-sliders. The stance is optimistic, evincing a belief in human perfectibility. Since all people are seen essentially as potential believers susceptible to conversion or correction, there is no character development beyond the individual’s recognition of party truth. Therefore, without productive interaction between characters, the only motive force rests with the author, who manipulates his puppet-like characters in obvious and predictable ways.

The typical story consists of five parts: description of physical setting, identification of major characters, introduction of problem to be solved, crisis scene, and resolution. The setting is always identified as a real one, mostly agricultural, taking place in the present-day DPRK. The next most popular type of setting after agricultural is industrial, but typically a rural locale. Most of the agricultural activity is related to change (that is, mechanization, improved fertilizers, more efficient methods, land reclamation, highway and railroad construction), which means that virtually no attention is given to traditional farming and the natural cycle - nature cannot dominate the land, for nature is to be overcome by man’s revolutionary struggle. The natural environment is typically beautiful to observe but harsh to encounter: mountains abound, and characters frequently struggle against the cold and snow (often a blizzard).

The major characters, identified at the outset by name and social function, are all local workers. Although the speech of characters reflects their differences in status, as is normal in the Korean language, the authors tend to equalize the characters throughout the narration by referring to them by their first names. The family structure is downplayed and made ancillary to such mainstream, task-oriented groups as work brigades, rural cooperatives, military outfits, factory-worker groups, student circles, and cultural clubs. Interaction of individuals without reference to these groups does not occur, hence ruling out any but the most tangential recognition of family and romantic love.

The problem introduced in the third part of the typical story is commonly a misunderstanding to be resolved, a back-slider to be encouraged, a quota to be met, a new technique to be perfected, or a struggle to overcome an adversary of the group (natural phenomena, Japanese, Americans). There is never any question about ultimate victory, and what doubters there are become converted in the course of the solution of the problem. The crucial meeting of forces in the fourth part gives way to a concluding resolution in which the problems are restated and a suggestion of future happiness and success is unveiled.

The didactic content, manipulative plot, and unconvincing characterization of the contemporary North Korean short story are functions of the same kind of social purpose that motivated the writers of the 'new novel' early in the twentieth c., the two are invested with a serious intent that is a function of the times. Both are valid and useful in terms of their social purposes: the 'new novel' helped to spread literacy and inculcate progressive ideas in early modern Korea and North Korean socialist realism has served to educate citizens of the DPRK along party lines.

Instead of relegating North Korean socialist realism to a marginal category of political propaganda, however, we would benefit by considering its affinities with the nineteenth-c. classical novel, which promoted virtue and reproved vice, the enlightenment's 'new novel', which advocated modern social ideas, and the idealistic realism of passionate left-wing writers of the colonial era. As observed in the section on kasa poetry, above, that form also exhibited continuity in its didacticism both during the Enlightenment period and in modern North Korea. Seen in this light, we can appreciate writing in the DPRK today as the expression of an impulse that runs deep in Korean literature.

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