A HISTORY OF
KOREAN LITERATURE

edited by
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Language, forms, prosody, and themes

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THE KOREAN LANGUAGE

Korean is spoken on the Korean peninsula as the sole native language and overseas as a second or foreign language. The current population of South Korea is over 45 million and that of North Korea around 23 million. Some 5.6 million Koreans reside outside the Korean peninsula. The major countries with a significant Korean population are China (2 million), the United States (2 million), Japan (700,000), and the former Soviet Union (500,000). Due to constant immigration, Koreans in the United States have become the fastest-growing segment of the overseas Korean population.

GENETIC AFFILIATION

There is no denying that Korean and Japanese are sister languages, although they are not mutually intelligible and their relationship is much more distant than that between, say, English and French. A sizeable number of cognates, partially attested sound correspondences, and many uniquely shared grammatical properties support the existence of a genetic relationship. The common origin of Korean and Japanese has been proposed by a number of scholars since Arai Hakuseki (1657–1725), a Tokugawa Confucian, in 1717, and Fujii Sadamoto (?1732–1797), a pioneer of modern archaeology in Japan, in 1781, first brought up the issue.[1] Samuel Martin systematically compares 320 sets of seeming cognates in Korean (K) and Japanese (J).[2]

The grammatical similarities between Korean and Japanese are conspicuous. Both are typical subject-object-verb (SOV) word-order languages.

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[1] Roy A. Miller, *The Japanese Language* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 61–62.
[2] S. E. Martin, "Lexical Evidence Relating Korean to Japanese," *Language* 42 (1966): 185–251. Martin used modern and available Middle Korean (fifteenth-century) forms and modern or slightly antiquated Japanese forms. See J. B. Whitman, "The Phonological Basis for the Comparison of Japanese and Korean" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1985), for a further study on the same subject.

Thus all predicates (verbs and adjectives) come at the end of a sentence or a clause; all modifiers (adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, numerals, genitive phrases, relative or conjunctive clauses, and so forth) precede their modified elements; and all particles follow their associated nominals as postpositions. Both languages have productive multiple-subject constructions (K *kkoch' ŭn changmi ka yeppŏyo* vs. J *hana wa bara ga kirei*: "[As for] flowers, roses are pretty"). Both languages allow situationally or contextually understood elements (subject, object, and so forth) to be omitted in speech. Both are pitch-accent languages, although in Korean only two of seven dialects (Kyŏngsang and Hamgyŏng) remain so. In both languages, intricate human relationships are encoded in the linguistic structure in terms of referent honorifics and speech levels.

Based on certain shared linguistic patterns, numerous historical-comparative linguists have proposed that Korean and Japanese are genetically related to the Altaic languages.[3] This Altaic hypothesis is quite persuasive given the available data and methodological refinements. It assigns Korean and Japanese to the Altaic family, which is composed mainly of Turkic, Mongolian, and Manchu-Tungus groups that range widely in the regions west and north of China. Original Altaic is thought to have been a linguistic unity spoken sometime during the Neolithic period, and its original homeland is assumed to be somewhere in northern or north-central Eurasia.[4]

Suggestions have also been made for a genetic affiliation of Korean and Japanese to Austronesian languages, on the one hand,[5] and to Dravidian languages on the other.[6] While an Austronesian stratum is quite dense in Japanese, any hypothesis linking Korean to Austronesian is premature in view of the lack of useful evidence.[7] The Dravidian hypothesis, however, merits our attention. For instance, M. E. Clippinger proposes a Korean–Dravidian (especially Tamil) connection by presenting 408 putative

[3] See Shiratori Kurakichi, "Chōsen-go to Ural-Altai go tono hikaku kenkyū," in *Shiratori Kurakichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami) 3 (1972):1–280; G. J. Ramstedt, *Studies in Korean Etymology* (Helsinki: Suomalis-Ugrilanen Seura, 1949); Yi Kimun, *Kaejŏng kugŏsa kaesŏl* (Minjung sŏgwan, 1976); and Baeg-in Sung "The Present State of Problems of Genealogical Studies of Korean," *KJ* 37 (1997):166–225.

[4] Roy A. Miller, *Japanese Language*, p. 341.

[5] See Susumu Ohno, *The Origin of the Japanese Language* (Tokyo: Kokusai bunka shinkōkai, 1970), and Shichiro Murayama, "The Malayo-Polynesian Component in the Japanese Language," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 2:2 (1976):413–436.

[6] See, for example, H. B. Hulbert, *A Comparative Grammar of the Korean Language and the Dravidian Languages of India* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House, 1905); Susumo Ohno, *Origin of the Japanese Language*; and M. E. Clippinger, "Korean and Dravidian: Lexical Evidence for an Old Theory," *Korean Studies* 8 (1984) 1–57.

[7] Unlike Korean, Japanese shares obvious phonological and lexical similarities with Oceanic languages: open syllables, lack of consonant clusters, and quite a few putative cognate sets.

cognates. He further points out various grammatical similarities between Korean and Dravidian, including the SOV word-order.

<div align="center">HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT</div>

Written historical data on early forms of the Korean language are scarce and cannot be traced far back. A few old language fragments are available in the literature dating from the eleventh century, such as *Kyunyŏ chŏn* (*Life of the Great Master Kyunyŏ*, 1075) by Hyŏngnyŏn Chŏng, *Kyerim yusa* (*Things on Korea*, 1103–1104) by the Song scholar Sun Mu, *Samguk sagi* (*Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms*, 1146) by Kim Pusik, and *Samyuk yusa* (*Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*, 1285) by the monk Iryŏn, all written in Chinese graphs. Moreover, much of the earlier vocabulary has been either irretrievably lost or obscured by succeeding waves of linguistic contact, including a massive influx of Chinese words. Thus our knowledge of the evolution of Korean during the Old Korean period (prehistory to the tenth century) is seriously limited. The few fragmentary records in *Weiji* (*Records of Wei*, written by Chen Shou in 285–297), *Hou Hanshu* (*History of Later Han*, by Fan Ye in 398–445), and *Zhoushu* (*History of Zhou*, c. 629), as well as some extant linguistic fragments, enable us to speculate that the Koguryŏ language was Tungusic, as were with the languages of Puyŏ, Okchŏ, and Yemaek; that the languages of the Three Han states were merely dialects of each other; and that the languages of Silla and Paekche, which absorbed the Three Han states, were much closer to each other than they were to the Koguryŏ language.[8] The period of Old Korean was the initial stage of the influx of sinograph words. In the sixth century, the titles of the kings were changed from pure Korean to Sino-Korean forms using the term *wang* (king). In the middle of the eighth century – during the Unified Silla period – native place-names were altered and modeled after the Chinese tradition so that they consisted of two Chinese graphs as they do now.

The form of Middle Korean (eleventh to sixteenth centuries) is much better known than that of Old Korean thanks to the invention of *hangŭl*, the Korean alphabet, by King Sejong in 1443–1444. Since abundant textual materials are available from the fifteenth century on, the development of Korean over the past 500 years has been captured in a systematic manner. Also, solid knowledge of fifteenth-century Korean has enabled scholars to reconstruct earlier forms, especially Early Middle Korean.

The Middle Korean period may be characterized by, among other things, the influx of a huge number of Chinese words into the Korean vocabulary.

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[8] Yi Kimun, *Kaejŏng kugŏsa kaesŏl*, is an in-depth study of the history of Korean.

Before this period, Chinese words were limited, in general, to the names of places, people, and government ranks. Starting with the Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392), however, Chinese words began to pervade the spoken language, as well as being used exclusively in writing.

Modern Korean (seventeenth to nineteenth centuries) and Contemporary Korean (twentieth century on) differ sharply from Middle Korean as a result of accumulated changes during the Middle Korean period. Modern Korean underwent further changes – probably expedited by the social and political disorder in the wake of the seven-year Japanese invasion that started in 1592, the popularization of vernacular literature, contact with foreign languages, and the importation of Western civilization.

Contemporary Korean has undergone an unprecedentedly complex history: the entry of missionaries, the collision between foreign powers in Korea, Japanese domination of Korea for thirty-five years, liberation from Japanese rule, division into North and South Korea, wide international contacts, the Korean War, rapid economic and technological growth, especially in South Korea, and social transformation in recent decades. All these events have had various effects on the language, especially the vocabulary. Thousands of newly coined words based on native elements in North Korea and thousands of recent loanwords from English in South Korea attest to this impact.

DIALECTAL VARIATIONS

Although the Korean language is relatively homogeneous – there is mutual intelligibility among speakers from different areas – there are minor but distinct dialectal differences. The Korean peninsula, both North and South Korea, may be divided into seven dialectal zones that correspond by and large to administrative districts:[9]

> Hamgyŏng Zone: North and South Hamgyŏng, extending to the north of Ch'ŏngp'yŏng, and Huch'ang in North P'yŏngan
> P'yŏngan Zone: North and South P'yŏngan (excluding Huch'ang)
> Central Zone: Kyŏnggi, Kangwŏn, Hwanghae, and South Hamgyŏng extending to Yŏnghŭng to the north
> Ch'ungch'ŏng Zone: North and South Ch'ungch'ŏng and Kŭmsan and Muju in North Chŏlla
> Kyŏngsang Zone: North and South Kyŏngsang
> Chŏlla Zone: North and South Chŏlla (other than Kŭmsan and Muju)
> Cheju Zone: Cheju

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[9] Kim Hyŏnggyu, *Hanguk pangŏn yŏngu*. Although Seoul is a separate administrative unit, it is regarded as part of Kyŏnggi province.

The dialect used by the Korean community in the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture of China in Manchuria can be included in the Hamgyŏng Zone because it has evolved as part of the Hamgyŏng dialect due to the early immigration of Hamgyŏng people to that area and their subsequent linguistic contacts. The dialects spoken by Koreans in the other areas of China and other countries around the globe also reflect the seven dialectal zones, depending on where the speakers originally migrated from.

The major cause of the formation of the dialectal zones has been geographic, but historical and political factors have also played important roles. The characteristics of the Cheju dialect, for instance, have been shaped by its isolation from the mainland. Moreover, the two neighboring areas, Kyŏngsang and Chŏlla, manifest great differences since, in the past, there was no major transport network connecting the two zones. Historically, too, these two zones were under two different dynasties, Kyŏngsang under the Silla kingdom and Chŏlla under Paekche. Another historical factor explains the demarcation between the Hamgyŏng dialect and the Central dialect, where there is no natural barrier. During the Koryŏ and Chosŏn dynasties, the area between Chŏngp'yŏng in the Hamgyŏng Zone and Yŏnghŭng in the Central Zone was the site of constant battling between the Manchu tribes called Jurchens in the north and the Koreans in the south. After the Manchu tribes were driven north during the Chosŏn dynasty, P'yŏngan province was inhabited by people from neighboring Hwanghae and Hamgyŏng was settled mainly by people from Kyŏngsang in the south. This explains the similarity between the P'yŏngan dialect and the Central dialect, on the one hand, and between the Hamgyŏng dialect and the Kyŏngsang dialect on the other. While influencing one another, the two northern dialects have also been affected by foreign languages such as Chinese, Tungus, Jurchen, and Russian, a fact responsible for the maturation of the P'yŏngan and Hamgyŏng dialects.

Many characteristics are unique either to each dialectal zone or to only a few zones. The general intonation patterns, utterance tempo, and sound qualities are quite different from one dialect to another. Vocabulary, word structure, sentence structure, and usage too are all slightly dissimilar.[10]

LINGUISTIC DIVERGENCE IN SOUTH AND NORTH

Apart from the geographically based dialectal differences discussed thus far, there is a superordinate bifurcation between North and South Korea. Linguistic divergence between the two Koreas since 1945 has been

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[10] Ho-min Sohn, *The Korean Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), for details.

accelerated mainly by three interrelated factors: complete physical insulation for over fifty years; polarized political, ideological, and social distinctions (with socialism in the North and capitalism in the South); and the different language policies implemented by the two governments, culminating in North Korea's institution of the P'yŏngyang-based Cultured Language (*munhwaŏ*) as their standard speech as opposed to the traditional Seoul-based Standard Language (*p'yojun mal*) of South Korea.

The areas of major linguistic divergence between Cultured Language (CL) and Standard Language (SL) include pronunciations, *hangŭl* spelling conventions, lexicon, meanings, and styles. Thus many words manifest phonological differences – the most conspicuous one appearing in the word-initial *r* in Sino-Korean words. In CL, *r* occurs freely in this position, whereas in SL it is omitted before *i* and *y* and replaced by *n* otherwise – as in CL *ri-ron* vs. SL *i-ron* (theory); CL *rye* vs. SL *ye* (example); CL *rag-wŏn* vs. SL *nag-wŏn* (paradise). Another difference appears in the presence in CL and absence in SL of the word-initial *n* before *i* and *y* – as in CL *nilgop* vs. SL *ilkop* (seven) and CL *nyŏ-sŏng* vs. SL *yŏ-sŏng* (female). Pronunciation of loanwords differs considerably between CL and SL – as in CL *minusu* vs. SL *mainŏsŭ* (minus); CL *rajio* vs. SL *radio* (radio); CL *ttangk'ŭ* vs. SL *t'aengk'ŭ* (tank); CL *wenggŭria* vs. SL *hŏnggari* (Hungary); and CL *mehikko* vs. SL *meksik'o* (Mexico).[11]

Considerable spelling disparities exist as well.[12] The differences can be traced to several causes. First, as a result of the emergence of two standards of speech, widening disparity in the two systems of spelling became inevitable – as in CL *tal.kal* vs. SL *tal.kyal* (egg) and CL *rae.il* vs. SL *nae.il* (tomorrow). Second, identical or similar phenomena are analyzed differently in determining affixes and words – as in CL *toe.yŏss.ta* vs. SL *toe.ŏss.ta* (became); CL *kal.ka?* vs. SL *kal.kka?* (shall [we] go?); and CL *nŏp.chŏk.k'o* vs. SL *nŏlp.chŏk.k'o* (flat nose). Third, while sharing the basic principle that spaces should be placed between words, South Korea observes this principle rather narrowly and North Korea's convention is, in many cases, to spell two or more words without spacing, giving them compound status – as in CL *segae* vs. SL *se kae* (three items) and CL *i.pak.sa* vs. SL *i pak.sa* (Dr. Lee). Fourth, the two systems adopt different conventions in regularizing forms

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11 Chŏn Sut'ae and Ch'oe Hoch'ŏl, *NambukHan ŏnŏ pigyo* (Nokchin, 1989), pp. 258–270.
12 These disparities are systematically analyzed in Ho-min Sohn, "Orthographic Divergence in South and North Korea: Toward a Unified Spelling System," in Young-Key Kim-Renaud, ed., *The Korean Alphabet: Its History and Structure* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), based on a comparison of two currently used *hangŭl* spelling systems: South Korea's *Hangŭl match'um pŏp* and North Korea's *Kaejŏnghan Chosŏnmal kyubŏm chip*.

and concepts, breaking with tradition to different degrees. North Korea's system appears to have broken with tradition more frequently and pursues more formal uniformity. South Korea follows the tradition allowing both horizontal and vertical writing, for instance, whereas North Korea stipulates that horizontal writing be used in principle. Only North Korea has changed the traditional names of the three letters *ki.yŏk*, *ti.gŭt*, and *si.os* to *ki.ŭk*, *ti.ŭt*, and *si.ŭt* to conform to the other consonants. For double consonants, South Korea uses the traditional Sino-Korean term *ssang* (twin) whereas North Korea uses the new term *toen* (hard, tense). The so-called epenthetic *s* is spelled in South Korea only when the preceding noun root ends in a vowel in native compounds and a few Sino-Korean compounds and is left out otherwise, whereas it is left out after every noun root in North Korea (since 1966) – as in CL *nae.ka* vs. SL *naes.ka* (riverside); and CL *se.cip* vs. SL *ses.cip* (house for rent). Furthermore, the alphabetical orders used for dictionary entries do not agree.

Divergence is particularly great in the lexicon. North Korea has enforced policies to standardize the language normatively in accordance with their communist ideology. In North Korea, both the abolition of Chinese graphs and the initiation of Cultured Language have been tied to a strong language purification movement. Thus North Korea has coined some 5,000 lexical items either by nativizing Sino-Korean words or by creating new words based on native roots, affixes, obsolete forms, and dialectal elements, while maximally limiting the importation of new loanwords. South Korea has been relatively generous in increasing the number of Sino-Korean words by creating new ones or importing Sino-Japanese words. In addition, nearly 20,000 English-based loanwords have been imported. Some examples of lexical divergence: CL *k'ŭn.gol* vs. SL *tae.noe* (the cerebrum); CL *ŏmun.il.kun* vs. SL *ŏn.ŏ.hak.cha* (linguist); CL *al.gok* vs. SL *yang.gok* (grains); CL *cik.sŭng.gi* vs. SL *hel.gi* (helicopter); and CL: *son-gich'ŏk* vs. SL *nok'ŭ* (knock).

While meanings and styles of words and phrases in South Korea are largely neutral, many expressions in North Korea have metaphorical connotations orienting the people toward socialism. Thus denotational or connotational meaning differences have been developed in certain words of daily usage. For instance, *inmin* (people) in North Korea refers to all the people who take a positive role in the development of a socialist country. Due to this ideological connotation, South Korea does not use the term but favors *kungmin* (people). Similarly, *rodong* (CL) / *nodong* (SL) (labor) has a different meaning in the two Koreas. In the North, it denotes a purposive action by means of political or physical effort that is beneficial to society; in

the South, it simply refers to physical work. The word *ilkun* (CL) / *ilkkun* (SL) refers to a person who is engaged in either physical or mental work in the North, but in the South it refers in general to a person engaged in hard manual labor.

Due to its long and frequent historical contact with China and Japan and rapid modernization in all walks of life, Korea has come to have a rich vocabulary. Some 450,000 lexical items are entered in *Urimal k'ŭn sajŏn* (*Great Dictionary of the Korean language*, 1991). The contemporary South Korean lexicon consists of approximately 35% native, 60% Sino-Korean, and 5% loan elements. Native words (*koyuŏ*) include not only the vocabulary essential to the maintenance of basic human life but also items unique to the time-honored culture of traditional Korea. Thus body parts, natural objects, flora and fauna, kinship terms, basic color terms, personal pronouns, simple numbers, basic actions, physical and psychological states, items relating to essential food, clothing, and shelter, terms for agriculture and fishery, honorific expressions, and onomatopoeia are all symbolized by native words, although many of the content words coexist with Sino-Korean (SK) counterparts. Basic grammatical relations are represented only by native particles or suffixes.

Rice, for instance, is a Korean staple food represented by many different native words: *mo* (rice seedling), *pyŏ/narak* (rice plant, unhusked rice), *ssal* (husked rice), *ssaragi* (broken bits of husked rice), *pap* (cooked rice), *nwi* (unhusked rice in husked rice), *olbyŏ* (early ripening rice plant or its unhusked rice), *ipssal* (white husked rice), *ch'apssal* (glutinous husked rice), *mepssal* (nonglutinous husked rice). Tradition is also reflected in the verbs of "wearing" and "carrying," which are differentiated depending on what parts of the body are involved. These include *ch'ada* (to wear [a watch, a sword, a decoration]), *chida* (to carry an inanimate object on the back), *ŏpta* (to carry an animate object on the back), *ida* (to carry on the head), *ipta* (to wear a dress), and *turŭda* (to wear a shawl).

Of the several thousand sound-symbolic or ideophonic words, most belong to the native stock. Examples are *p'adak* vs. *p'ŏdŏk* (flapping, flopping, splashing), *norat'a* vs. *nurŏt'a* (to be yellow), *kosohada* vs. *kusuhada* (to taste or smell like sesame or rice tea), and *tonggŭrat'a* vs. *tunggŭrŏt'a* (to be round).

The traditional borrowing was mainly from China. Although borrowings from spoken Chinese ceased long ago, Chinese graphs and the concepts they

represent have been used expediently and productively to coin thousands of new words. All Koreanized words based on Chinese graphs – whether ancient borrowings directly from China, reborrowings indirectly from Sino-Japanese, or coinages in Korea – are called SK words or *hanchaŏ* (sinograph words) for two reasons: because Chinese culture and learning permeated all facets of Korean life in the past and because, due to the logographic and monosyllabic nature of the graphs, Sino-Korean forms facilitate new word formation much more efficiently than native forms to represent the new concepts and products that continuously appear as civilization progresses. Thus nearly all terms in academic fields, politics, occupations, economy, law, society, and other cultural domains, as well as personal, place, and institutional names, are Sino-Korean words. Numerals, months, days of the week, color terms, and a large number of kinship terms and classifier nouns are also in Sino-Korean. The majority of these terms were coined in Japan as Sino-Japanese and then introduced to Korea, as well as to China, since Japan was the first nation in East Asia to import Western civilization and culture during the Meiji Restoration. The difference between Sino-Japanese and Sino-Korean words is primarily in pronunciation.

When were Chinese words and Chinese graphs first introduced into Korea? This question remains unanswered due to the lack of historical data. The only deduction we can make is that they must have been used in Korea as early as the first century BC, when Han China colonized the western and northern parts of the Korean peninsula and established its four commanderies there. One historical record shows that a Paekche national named Wang In went to Japan with many Chinese books around AD 400 – suggesting that Chinese culture and graphs had achieved considerable popularity in the Three Kingdoms period. With the unification of the Korean peninsula by the Silla dynasty in 677, the use of Chinese graphs in Korea gained more popularity as Silla's unification was achieved with Tang China's military support and subsequently contact between the two countries became frequent. Earlier, in 503, the name of the country and the title of the king were changed from native forms to Sino-Korean terms. In 682, a government organization in charge of national education (*kukhak*) was established and many Chinese classics began to be taught. In 757, native place-names were changed to two-graph Sino-Korean; in 759, all official titles were Sino-Koreanized as well. Personal names of the elite began to be Sino-Koreanized during the Silla period.

Native words began to be overwhelmed by Sino-Korean words in the Koryŏ dynasty. This was particularly the case after King Kwangjong adopted, in 958, the Chinese system of civil service examinations based

on the Chinese classics. In this period, government officials and the elite, as well as scholars and literary men, used native words in speaking but Sino-Korean words in writing. The Chosŏn dynasty observed the all-out infiltration of Chinese graphs into every facet of Korean culture and society – chiefly because of the dynasty's adoption of Confucianism as the state political and moral philosophy and, as a result, the popular admiration of everything Chinese.

As for the origin of Sino-Korean sounds, it is generally assumed that the pronunciation of Chinese graphs used in the northern part of China during the Sui and Tang dynasties around the seventh to eighth centuries constituted their basis. This was during the Unified Silla period when innumerable written materials on Chinese civilization were imported from China. Thus pronunciations of contemporary Chinese words in Korean are similar to those of Middle Chinese, although independent vowel and consonant changes as well as the loss of tones have occurred in Korea.

As noted earlier, there are three layers of Sino-Korean words: Sino-Korean words from Chinese such as *chayŏn* (nature), *ch'ŏnji* (heaven and earth), *haksaeng* (student), and *hyoja* (filial son); Sino-Korean words from Sino-Japanese such as *chango* (deposit balance), *chŏnsŏn* (electricity cord), *chwadam* (table talk), and *ipku* (entrance); Sino-Korean words coined in Korea such as *chŏndap* (paddies and dry fields), *ch'onggak* (bachelor), *chujŏnja* (tea-kettle), *oesang* (on credit). The first of the three layers has the most members. The Sino-Korean words in this layer were introduced mainly through Confucian classics, history, and literary books, as well as Chinese works written in colloquial Chinese. Sino-Japanese coinages abound in Korean. Words like *pihaenggi* (airplane), *yŏnghwa* (movie), *kongjang* (factory), *ch'ukku* (football), *pul* (dollar), and other words coined by Japanese are used only in Japan and Korea, not in China.

Some Sino-Korean words were borrowed from written Chinese in ancient times and have undergone change either in form alone or in both form and meaning. Moreover, a few words were introduced from spoken Chinese. Examples are *paech'u* (Chinese cabbage; SK *paekch'ae* [white vegetable]); *mŏk* (inkstone; SK *muk*); *siwŏl* (ten-moon [October]; SK *sipwŏl*); *ka* (edge; SK *kye*; Ancient Chinese *kai*); *kage* (store; SK *kaga* [false house]); *kanan* (poverty; SK *kannan* [hardship]).[13]

Loanwords are abundant in Korean. The modern borrowing has been predominantly from the scientifically and technologically advanced United

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[13] See Sim Chaegi, *Kugŏ ŏhwi non* (Chimmundang, 1983); Jeon Jae-Ho, *Kugŏ ŏhwisa yŏngu* (Taegu: Kyŏngbuk University Press, 1992); and Kim Chong-taek, *Kugŏ ŏhwi ron* (Tower, 1993).

States and Europe. These non-Sino-Korean loanwords are called *oeraeŏ* (words from abroad). Up until 1945 when Korea was liberated from thirty-five years of Japanese domination, loanwords were introduced into Korean exclusively through Japanese with spelling and pronunciation adjustments in accordance with Korean sound patterns. Only since 1945 has direct importation from English been prevalent. A number of English words have been introduced as new loanwords and many existing loanwords from other languages have been replaced by English loans. As a result, the total number of current loanwords is estimated at more than 20,000, of which English accounts for over 90%. In fact, most borrowings in South Korea since 1945 are words from English ranging over all aspects of life including clothing, food and drink, electricity and electronics, automobiles, sports, arts, social activities, politics, and economy. Random examples are *aisŭk'ŭrim* (ice cream), *allibai* (alibi), *heding* (heading in soccer), *hint'ŭ* (hint), *k'alla* (collar), *k'aemp'ŏsŭ* (campus), and *k'ŭredit k'adŭ* (credit card).

Both Sino-Korean and loanwords are an integral part of the Korean vocabulary. The impact of such non-native words on the Korean language is considerable. One effect is the proliferation of a number of synonymous expressions. The SK word *sŭngganggi* has long been used to denote an elevator, for instance, but is gradually being replaced by the loanword *ellibeit'ŏ*. The SK word *t'ajagi* and the loanword *t'aip'urait'ŏ* for a typewriter and the SK word *chŏnch'a* and the loanword *t'aengk'ŭ* (tank) are used with about equal frequency. Many SK words are still used exclusively: *sŏnp'unggi* (electric fan), *chadongch'a* (car), *chŏnhwa* (telephone), and *naengjanggo* (refrigerator), for example.

Frequently, synonymous words are associated with different shades of meaning and stylistic or social values, thus enriching the Korean vocabulary. When synonyms exist, native words usually represent traditional culture, both conceptual and physical, whereas Sino-Korean words, conveying more formality, tend to denote more sophisticated objects and more formal, abstract, and sometimes more socially prestigious concepts than their native counterparts do. Loanwords are, in general, associated with modern and stylish objects and concepts. For instance, the native word *karak* (rhythm) is usually used with reference to traditional Korean folk songs, the SK word *unyul* in formal or academic situations, and the loanword *ridŭm* for some sort of Western flavor. The triplet *ch'um* (native), *muyong* (SK), and *taensŭ* (loan) for "dance" has similar connotational differences. The native word *chip* is used when referring to one's own house or a house of a social inferior, but the SK word *taek* is used when referring to a socially superior adult's house. While there is no native term for a hotel, the SK word *yŏgwan*

refers to inexpensive Korean-style inns whereas the loanword *hot'el* refers to expensive Western-style hotels where beds are provided.

Although some Sino-Korean words and loanwords have been adapted to the sound patterns of native Korean, native sound patterns are sometimes affected by non-native words. For instance, fifteenth-century Korean had (and the Kyŏngsang and Hamgyŏng dialects still have) lexical tones that may be due to the prolonged influx of Chinese words. Loanwords where word-initial *r* appears – such as *rak'et* (racket), *radio* (radio), *rait'ŏ* (lighter), and *rotte hot'el* (Hotel Lotte) – have been disrupting the original sound pattern where no native words begin with an initial *r* sound, a characteristic shared by Altaic languages. Furthermore, Sino-Korean words where no vowel harmony is observed have contributed to the collapse of vowel harmony in native words.

As a consequence, many native words have been lost in the battle with Sino-Korean and loanwords and disappeared from usage long ago, frequently irrecoverably. While Chinese graphs in Japanese are read in both Sino-Japanese pronunciation and the pronunciation of corresponding native words, thereby contributing to the maintenance of the latter, Chinese graphs in Korea are read only in Sino-Korean pronunciation, contributing to the atrophy of native words. Sino-Korean *san* (mountain), *kang* (river), *ch'inch'ŏk* (relative), *paek* (100), and *ch'ŏn* (1,000), for example, have completely replaced the native *moe*, *karam*, *aam*, *on*, and *chŭmŭn*, respectively.

THE KOREAN ALPHABET: *HANGŬL*

At present, the Korean alphabet called *hangŭl* is the main writing system used by all Koreans to represent native, Sino-Korean, and loanwords. (Chinese graphs are optionally used to represent only Sino-Korean words.) Before the nineteenth century when Western cultures began to permeate East Asia, China had long been the center of East Asian civilization. Chinese civilization was propagated to neighboring countries mainly through written Chinese based on Chinese graphs. Thus the Chinese script has long been an integral part of the writing systems of Koreans and indeed was the only system before the creation of *hangŭl* in 1443–1444. Before *hangŭl*, since Chinese graphs were used mostly by the elite, commoners had no means of written communication. The ruling class of Korea devoted their entire lives to the study of classical Chinese, written in graphs, because it was the main goal of education, the official means of government affairs, and the medium of civil service examinations.

In an effort to remedy this predicament, early scholars devised writing systems using Chinese graphs for the pronunciation and transcription of native Korean affixes, words, and sentences. A few varieties of this writing were subsumed under the term *idu* (clerk reading) and were used during all three ancient kingdoms (Silla, Paekche, and Koguryŏ) and also later during the Koryŏ and Chosŏn dynasties. The *idu* script was used to record Korean expressions by means of Chinese graphs borrowed in their Chinese meaning but read as the corresponding Korean sounds (glossograms) or by means of Chinese graphs borrowed in their Chinese sounds only (phonograms). This script allowed people to record personal names, place-names, and vernacular songs and poems. This writing was also used to clarify government documents and other books written in Chinese. The King Kwanggaet'o stele of Koguryŏ contains many phonetic transcriptions written in the *idu* script, as do early Silla inscriptions. Moreover, a number of Chinese graphs in the *idu* script are found in the *Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms* and *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*. Because this writing was inadequate as a means of written communication, the *hyangch'al* system was invented to transcribe entire sentences into Chinese graphs for sound and sense.

It was under these circumstances that *hangŭl* was created – a phonetic writing system completely disengaged from the Chinese script. This indigenous phonetic alphabet is one of the most remarkable writing systems ever devised.[14] For the design of the *hangŭl* alphabet, King Sejong (1397–1450) and the scholars of the Hall of Worthies studied the rich Chinese linguistic tradition, such as the concepts of consonants (initials), syllables, and tones, as well as their philosophical background. The orthographic design of *hangŭl* – based on a rigorous analysis of Korean and Sino-Korean sound – was completed in 1443. To test the new writing system, the king ordered the composition of *Yongbi ŏch'ŏn ka* (*Songs of Flying Dragons*, 1445–1447), a eulogy cycle in 125 cantos with 248 poems, in the new alphabet with translations in Chinese graphs.[15]

[14] This alphabet was named *hangŭl* by Chu Sigyŏng (1876–1914), a pioneer linguist of Korean. Formerly it was popularly called *ŏnmun* (vernacular writing, vulgar script). There are many works on the study of *hangŭl*. In English see Gari K. Ledyard, "The Korean Language Reform of 1446: The Origin, Background and Early History of the Korean Alphabet" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1966); Cheong-Ho Lee, *Haesŏl yŏkchu Hunmin chŏngŭm. Translated and Annotated Hunmin Chŏngŭm* (Korean Library Science Research Institute, 1972); Kim-Renaud, ed., *The Korean Alphabet*; and Sek Yen Kim-Cho, *The Korean Alphabet of 1446* (Seoul: Asia Culture Press, and Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 2002). The present survey owes to Ledyard's dissertation.
[15] See Peter H. Lee, *Songs of Flying Dragons: A Critical Reading* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), for an extensive discussion of this cycle.
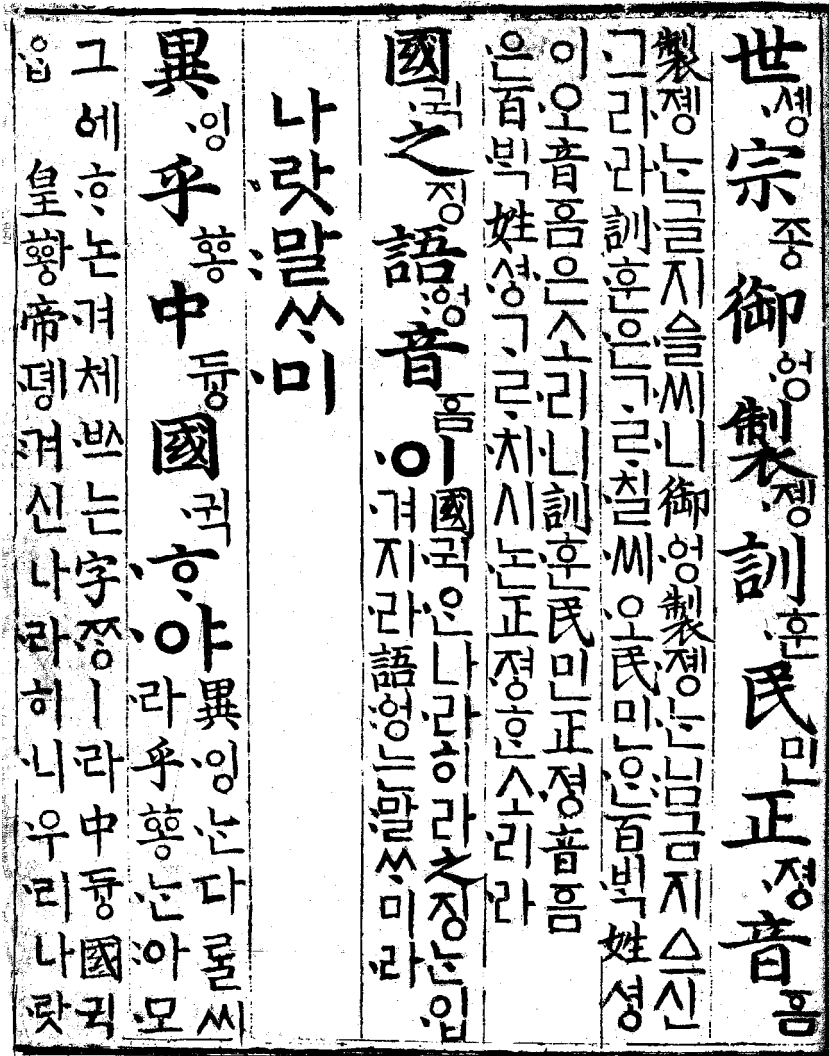
Example 1.   King Sejong (1397–1450), beginning of *Correct Sounds for Teaching the People* (1459).

King Sejong promulgated *hangŭl* on 9 October 1446 under the name *Hunmin chŏngŭm* (*Correct Sounds for Teaching the People*). Written by Sejong himself, the alphabet was accompanied by *Hunmin chŏngŭm haerye* (*Explanations and Examples of the Correct Sounds*), compiled by a group of scholars commissioned by the king. These two documents were published as a single book. The text of *Hunmin chŏngŭm* consists of three

parts: preface, pronunciation of the letters, and rules for combining letters. The preface briefly summarizes Sejong's motives for inventing *hangŭl*: "The speech sounds of Korea are distinct from those of China and thus are not communicable with Chinese graphs. Hence many people having something to put into words are unable to express their feelings. To overcome such distressing circumstances, I have newly devised twenty-eight letters that everyone can learn with ease and use with convenience in daily life." In the second part, the sound values of the newly devised twenty-eight letters (seventeen consonants and eleven vowels) are explained in Chinese graphs; the third part presents rules regarding the use of *hangŭl* letters and other symbols in syllable blocks. *Hunmin chŏngŭm haerye* explains and illustrates the contents of *Hunmin chŏngŭm* in detail. It consists of seven parts: design of the letters, syllable-initial sounds, syllable-medial sounds, syllable-final sounds, combinations of letters, use of the letters, and a postface by Chŏng Inji (1397–1478).

After its creation, *hangŭl* underwent several major ordeals in the course of its diffusion in the face of the long tradition of the use of Chinese graphs by the nobility and officials during the Chosŏn period. Although King Sejong's invention of *hangŭl* was a great cultural achievement, a group of scholar-officials led by Ch'oe Malli (fl. 1419–1444), then associate academician of the Hall of Worthies, opposed the common use of the alphabet and presented an anti-*hangŭl* memorial to the throne in 1444. Their main argument was that Korea had long emulated Chinese ideas and institutions and that adoption of Korea's own writing system would make it impossible to identify Korean civilization with that of China but instead would identify Korea with barbarians such as Mongols, Tanguts, Jurchens, Japanese, and Tibetans who had their own scripts. This appeal had little effect on Sejong's determination.

After Sejong's death, the opposition to *hangŭl* continued until Sejo (1455–1468), the seventh king, propagated *hangŭl* with Buddhism. Still, literary Chinese and *idu* were predominant while *hangŭl* served as an aid for the study of literary Chinese and was used mostly by women. Not until the Kabo Reform of 1894 did *hangŭl* come to be used in official documents. King Kojong's decree of 21 November 1894 stipulated that all regulations and royal decrees be written in the alphabet. Exclusive use of *hangŭl* in government documents was rather exceptional, however, and a host of government regulations were written in the alphabet mixed with Chinese graphs. Indeed, mixed use of the two scripts became a common practice among the general public, as it is today.

During the Japanese occupation of Korea (1910–1945), the use of Korean, including *hangŭl*, was suppressed and the Korean people were forced to

use Japanese. When Korea was liberated from Japan in 1945, use of the Korean language and alphabet was restored in both South and North Korea and became a symbol of independence and the reawakening of national consciousness.

The Korean consonants, which correspond to nineteen *hangŭl* letters, are *p/b*, *p'*, *pp*; *t/d*, *t'*, *tt*; *ch/j*, *ch'*, *tch*; *k/g*, *k'*, *kk*; *s*, *ss*; *h*; *m*, *n*, *ng*; and *l/r*. Korean has eight vowels (*i*, *e*, *ae*, *ŭ*, *ŏ*, *a*, *u*, *o*), two semivowels (*w*, *y*), and a number of diphthongs. Some dialectal zones lack a few of these consonants, vowels, and diphthongs.

In the speech of older Koreans (aged fifty and older as of the year 2000), vowel length is significant in differentiating meanings. Vowel length (:) is not indicated in *hangŭl* orthography – as in *chong* [chong] (bell) vs. *chong* [cho:ng] (servant), *mal* [mal] (horse) vs. *mal* [ma:l] (language), *nun* [nun] (eye) vs. *nun* [nu:n] (snow), and *pae* [pae] (ship/pear/stomach) vs. *pae* [pae:] (double). Younger speakers do not make such vowel length distinctions.

In Korean there is a difference between written (here boldface) and spoken (here italic) syllables in that the former allow consonant clusters in the syllable-final position (**kaps** [price]) while the latter do not allow more than one consonant in that position (*kap* [price]). Korean spoken syllables have a simple internal structure. One vowel must be present as the nucleus. It may be preceded by a consonant, a semivowel, or both, and may be followed by a consonant – as in **i** *i* (two), **na** *na* (I), **ip'** *ip* (leaf), **hyŏ** *hyŏ* (tongue), **talk** *tak* (chicken), **salm** *sam* (life), **pu.ok'** *pu.ŏk* (kitchen), where boldface is written and italics are spoken forms and the dot (.) stands for a syllable boundary.

Speech sounds alternate in different environments without changing meanings. For instance, **ch'** in the written form **kkoch'** (flower) shows the following sound alternations: *ch'* as in **kkoch' i** → *kko.ch'i* (flower [subject] – before a vowel), *t* as in **kkoch'** → *kkot* (flower) and **kkoch'-to** → *kkot.to* ("flower" also – pronounced independently or before a non-nasal consonant), and *n* as in **kkoch'-namu** → *kkon.na.mu* (flower tree – before a nasal consonant). Note that the consonants alternate in these examples without changing the meaning "flower." There are some two dozen sound-alternation rules in Korean.

Sound symbolism (mimesis) is widespread in Korean, which has several thousand sound-symbolic words. Sound symbolism is reflected in both vowels and consonants. As for vowels, bright (*yang*) vowels *a*, *ae*, *o* tend

to connote brightness, sharpness, lightness, smallness, thinness, and quickness, whereas dark (*ŭm*) vowels *e*, *u*, *ŏ* indicate darkness, heaviness, dullness, slowness, deepness, and thickness. In pairs such as *p'adak* vs. *p'ŏdŏk* (flapping), *norat'a* vs. *nurŏt'a* (yellow), *hwanhada* vs. *hwŏnhada* (open, clear), for instance, the first word contains a bright vowel *a* or *o* while the second has a dark vowel *ŏ* or *u*, causing bright and dark connotational differences. As for consonants, sound-symbolic words show differences among plain, aspirated, and tensed consonants. A plain consonant tends to connote slowness, gentleness, heaviness, and bigness; an aspirated consonant flexibility, elasticity, crispness, and swiftness; and a tensed consonant compactness, tightness, hardness, smallness, and extra swiftness. For instance, *chul-jul*, *ch'ul-ch'ul*, and *tchul-tchul* (trickling, flowing persistently) denote, among other things, an increasingly smaller quantity of liquid but faster action. Similarly, in *ping-ping*, *p'ing-p'ing*, and *pping-pping* (round and round – spinning, turning, whirling), the manner of turning is gradually faster. Thus a plane whirls in the sky in a *ping-ping* manner, a top turns in a *p'ing-p'ing* manner, and a rotary press spins in a *pping-pping* manner.

WORD STRUCTURE

Korean is a typical agglutinative language in that one or more affixes with constant form and meaning may be attached to various stems. In *po-i-si-ŏt-kes-sŭm-ni-da* ([a respectable person] may have been seen), for instance, the passive verb stem *po-i* (be seen) consists of the verb stem *po* (see) and the passive suffix *-i*. The remaining suffixes indicate various grammatical functions of the stem *po-i*: the subject honorific *-si*, the past tense *-ŏt*, the modal *-kes* (may), the addressee honorific *-sŭm*, the indicative *-ni*, and the declarative ending *-da*. Many Korean suffixes either do not have counterparts or correspond to independent words in nonagglutinative languages such as English and Chinese. For instance, some English conjunctive words are equivalent to Korean suffixes – as in *ka-go* (go and) and *ka-myŏn* (if one goes) where *-ko* (and) and *-myŏn* (if) are suffixes.

Many words are formed by compounding two or more noun roots or predicate stems. For instance, the expression *annyŏnghaseyo?* (how are you?) consists of SK roots *an* and *nyŏng* (safety) and native adjective stem *ha* (to be), followed by the subject honorific suffix *-se* and the courtesy ending *-yo*. The two roots *an* and *nyŏng* constitute a compound noun that in turn compounds with *ha* – resulting in a compound adjective stem *annyŏngha* (peaceful). The meanings of compound words may be idiomatized to varying degrees from complete fusion – as in *nun-chit* (eye

behavior – wink), *ttang-gŏmi* (earth-black – dusk), *kŏ-rae* (go-come – trans-action), and *p'ung-wŏl* (wind-moon – poetry) – to relatively transparent association as in *pam-nat* (day and night), *ma-so* (horses and oxen), *chip-chip* (houses), *hyo-ja* (filial son), and *mi-in* (pretty person, pretty woman). In general, a native element combines with a native element and an SK element with an SK element – as in native *sŏk-tal* and SK *sam-gae-wŏl*, both meaning "three months."

Of all types of compounds, compound nouns are the most numerous and varied. Examples of compound verbs are *am-mot-poda* (front-unable-see – be blind), *maŭm-mŏkta* (mind-eat – intend, plan), *son-boda* (hand-see – fix), and *tol-boda* (go around-see – take good care of). Examples of compound adjectives are *hŏmul-ŏpta* (fault-lack – be on friendly terms), *him-dŭlda* (power-enter – be strenuous), *nun-mŏlda* (eye-far – be blind), and *sil-ŏpta* (substance-lack – be insincere).

Numerous words are formed through derivational affixation (prefixing and suffixing). Affixes are from both the native and the SK stocks. Loan affixes are rare. In general, a native affix occurs with a native root or stem, and an SK affix with an SK root or stem. There are several hundred derivational affixes (boldface here) in Korean. They occur predominantly in nouns, verbs, and adjectives – **maen**-*bal* (bare-foot – barefoot), **hor**-*abi* (single-father – widower), **mad**-*adŭl* (first-son – the eldest son), and **chŏn**-*sege* (entire-world – whole world). Derived verbs include **cit**-*papta* (randomly-step on – overrun), **pi**-*utta* (twisted-laugh – scorn), **pin**-*nagada* (aslant-go out – go astray), **sŏl**-*ikta* (insufficiently-ripe – be half-cooked/half-ripe), and *chungŏl*-**dae**da (mutter-repeat – mutter repeatedly). Derived verbs also include causative or passive ones – as in *po*-**ida** (see-cause/be – show, be seen), *chop*-**hida** (narrow-cause – make narrow), *mut*-**hida** (bury-be – be buried), and *mul*-**lida** (bite-cause/be – cause someone to bite, be bitten). Examples of derived adjectives are **sae**-*kkamat'a*/**si**-*kkŏmŏt'a* (vivid-black – be deep black), *nop*-**tara**t'a (high-rather – rather high), *nunmul*-**gyŏp**ta (tears-full – be touching), and *hyanggi*-**rop**ta (aroma-characterized by – be fragrant).

<p style="text-align:center">SENTENCE STRUCTURE</p>

Korean sentences are predicate-final – sharing the grammatical properties of other predicate-final languages such as Japanese, Altaic, and Dravidian – and are very different from sentences of, for example, English, French, Chinese, and Austronesian. In normal speech, the predicate (verb or ad-jective) comes at the end of a sentence or a clause. All other elements, including the subject and object, must appear before the predicate – as

illustrated here, where SB = subject, RL = relative clause suffix, OB = object, SH = subject honorific suffix, and PL = polite-level ending:

[*Nae ka hakkyo esŏ* **manna**]-*n pun   i   hangugŏ rŭl* **karŭch'i-seyo.**
I   SB school at meet-RL   person SB Korean OB teach-SH-PL
"The person I met at school teaches Korean."

Notice that the verb *manna* (meet) occurs at the end of the relative clause and the verb *karŭch'ida* (teach) at the end of the whole sentence.

In Korean all modifiers – whether adjectives, adverbs, numerals, relative clauses, subordinate or coordinate clauses, determiners, or genitive constructions – must precede the element they modify. In *Pusan kkaji aju ppalli talli-nŭn kich'a* (the train which runs very fast to Pusan), for example, *Pusan kkaji* (to Pusan) and *aju ppalli* (very fast) modify their head verb *tallida* (run); *aju* (very) modifies its head *ppalli* (fast); and the whole relative clause *Pusan kkaji aju ppalli talli-nŭn* (which runs very fast to Pusan) modifies *kich'a* (train). Note also that the relative-clause suffix *-nŭn* functions like an English relative pronoun.

As observed in many of the preceding examples, particles (boldface) are postpositional, occurring after a nominal – as in *Nae* **ka**, *hakkyo* **esŏ**, *pun* **i**, *hangugŏ* **rŭl**, and *Pusan* **kkaji**. Titles follow names – as in *Kim paksa-nim* (Dr. Kim). Grammatical functions such as subject and addressee honorification, past tense, mood, and sentence types are expressed in the form of suffixes occurring after predicate stems, as already noted earlier under "Word structure." Also, unlike English, there is no inversion of any element in question sentences.

The comparative expression takes the order: standard + comparative particle + degree adverb + adjective, as in *Mirani nŭn Mia poda tŏ yeppŭ-ta* (Miran is prettier than Mia), where *Mia* is a standard, *poda* is a comparative particle, *tŏ* is a degree adverb, and *yeppŭ-ta* is an adjective.

Particles are responsible for various grammatical and semantic functions. Particles may be agglutinated to each other after a relevant nominal – as in *Miguk ŭro-put'ŏ-ŭi sosik* (news from the United States). Note that the particles such as directional *ŭro*, source *put'ŏ*, and possessive *ŭi* occur in sequence after *Miguk*.

Although the subject tends to appear first in a sentence, it and other nominal elements can be scrambled for emphatic or other figurative purposes:

Na nŭn   ŏje   san   esŏ kkwŏng ŭl chab-ass-ŏyo.
I   as for yesterday mountain on pheasant OB catch-PAST-PL
"I caught a pheasant on the mountain yesterday."

Korean is often called a situation-oriented or discourse-oriented language in that contextually or situationally understood elements (including subject and object) are left unexpressed more frequently than not. Thus, for instance, in *ŏdi ka-se-yo?* (where-go? – Where are you going?), the subject "you" does not appear. Using a word denoting "you" in such expressions would sound awkward in normal contexts, unless "you" is emphasized or contrasted with someone else – as in "as for you."

Korean is a "macro-to-micro" language in that the universe is represented in the order of a set (macro) and then its members (micro). Thus, for instance, Koreans say the family name first and then the given name followed by a title; say an address in the order of country, province, city, street, house number, and personal name; and refer to time with year first and seconds last.

While nouns occur freely by themselves, verbs and adjectives cannot function without an ending. For this reason the dummy suffix *-ta/-da* is attached to a stem for citation or dictionary entries. For instance, the verb stem *po* (see) and the adjective stem *choh* (be good) are entered in the dictionary as *poda* and *chot'a*, respectively.

There are four major sentence types characterized by sentence endings: declarative (statement), interrogative (question), propositive (proposal), and imperative (command) – as in *cha-nda* (declarative: [He] sleeps), *cha-ni?* (interrogative: Does [he] sleep?), *cha-ra* (imperative: Go to sleep!), and *cha-ja* (propositive: Let's sleep). These four types are interwoven with six speech levels.

LINGUISTIC COURTESY

Language has two important tasks: transmitting information (transactional function) and maintaining human relationships (interactional function). It is the interactional function that is relevant to linguistic courtesy. Although courtesy expressions are ubiquitous across all languages, their forms and functions differ from language to language – conditioned by respective linguistic structures and usage as well as by the cultural perspectives (attitudes, beliefs, values) of the speaker. For instance, compare English and Korean in expressing "Good night" by son and father: [English] "Good night, Dad" (by son) and "Good night, John" (by father) vs. [Korean] "Abŏji, annyŏnghi chumu-se-yo" ("Dad, sleep well") (by son) and "nŏdo chal cha-ra" ("You too sleep well") (by father). Note that in English son and father use the same expression except for the address terms: a kinship term by the son and a given name by the father. In Korean, by contrast, they use entirely different utterances. Not a single element is shared. Under no circumstances may

the son use any part of his father's utterance in expressing "good night" to his father and vice versa. Both the son's and the father's utterances are appropriate and polite. They must always be used in that way.

There are two types of linguistic courtesy, normative and strategic. The function of normative politeness is social indexing; that of strategic politeness is saving face. In general, expression of normative politeness is bound by the cultural norms of a society whereas expression of strategic politeness is controlled by interlocutors in interactive situations in performing their communicative goals. Thus while the former is largely culture-bound, the latter is universal to a great extent. Both types of courtesy expressions normally occur together in the same discourse. By and large, normative politeness in Korean is expressed by time-honored grammatical forms of courtesy, which are called honorifics, whereas strategic politeness is expressed by various assertion-softening or assertion-reinforcing measures – phatic expressions, conversational formulas, hedges, intonation, and direct or indirect speech acts – as well as praise, approval, sympathy, seeking agreement, and giving options to the addressee.

Korean has an elaborate honorific system.[16] Sentences cannot be uttered without the speaker's approximate knowledge of his social relationship with the addressee or referent in terms of age category (adult, adolescent, or child), social status, kinship, and in- and out-groupness. Korean honorifics include speech levels, personal pronouns, address-reference terms, content words and particles, and subject- and addressee-honorific suffixes.

Speech levels

Korean has six speech levels marked by sentence endings, illustrated here with *po-* (see):

	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative	Propositive
plain	*po-nda*	*po-ni?/po-nŭnya?*	*po-ara/pora*	*po-ja*
intimate	*po-a*	*po-a?*	*po-a*	*po-a*
familiar	*po-ne*	*po-na?*	*po-ge*	*po-se*
blunt	*po-o*	*po-o?*	*po-o*	*po-psida*
polite	*po-ayo*	*po-ayo?*	*po-ayo*	*po-ayo*
deferential	*po-mnida*	*po-mnikka?*	*po-si-psio*	*po-si-psida*

Speakers use different levels based on whom they are talking to. The plain level is used by any speaker to any child, to one's own siblings, children, or grandchildren regardless of age, to one's daughter-in-law, or between

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[16] The honorific system of Korean is one of the most systematic of all known languages. In this respect, Korean may be called an honorific language.

intimate adult friends whose friendship started in childhood. The intimate level (polite-level form minus *-yo*), also called a half-talk style, is used by an adult to an adult junior such as a student, by a child of preschool age to his or her family members including parents, or between close friends whose friendship began in childhood or adolescence; this level is frequently intermixed with the plain or familiar level in the same discourse with the same person. The familiar level is typically used by a male adult to an adult inferior or adolescent such as a high school or college student or to one's son-in-law or to an old friend. The blunt level, sometimes used by a boss to his subordinates, is disappearing from daily usage (probably due to its blunt connotation). Most young speakers use only the plain, intimate, polite, and deferential levels.

The most popular level toward an adult is the polite one, which is an informal counterpart of the deferential level. This level is widely used by both males and females in casual conversation. While females predominantly use this level in all conversations, males use both the polite and deferential levels to address an equal or superior adult. Even in a formal conversational situation, the deferential and polite levels are intermixed by the same interlocutors in the same discourse. In formal situations such as news reports and public lectures, only the deferential style is used.

Personal pronouns

There are person, number, and speech-level distinctions also. Here *D* stands for a demonstrative *i* (this), *kŭ* (that), and *chŏ* (that over there):

		Singular	Plural
1st person:	Plain	*na*	*uri(-tŭl)*
	Humble	*chŏ*	*chŏ-hŭi(-dŭl)*
2nd person:	Plain	*nŏ*	*nŏ-hui(-dŭl)*
	Familiar	*chane*	*chane-dŭl*
	Intimate	*chagi*	*chagi-dŭl*
	Blunt	*tangsin*	*tangsin-dŭl*
		taek	*taek-tŭl*
	Deferential	*ŏrŭsin*	*ŏrŭsin-dŭl*
3rd person:	Thing	*D-kŏt*	*D-kŏt-tŭl*
	Child	*D-ae*	*D-ay-dŭl*
	Adult-familiar	*D-saram*	*D-saram-dŭl*
	Adult-blunt	*D-i*	*D-i-dŭl*
	Adult-polite	*D-bun*	*D-bun-dŭl*

3rd-person	Plain	*chŏ(-jasin)*	*chŏ(-jasin)-dŭl*
reflexive (self):	Neutral	*chagi(-jasin)*	*chagi(-jasin)-dŭl*
	Deferential	*tangsin(-jasin)*	*tangsin(-jasin)-dŭl*

Address-reference terms

An extensive set of highly stratified address-reference terms is used – here given in the order of decreasing deference and distance: *Kim paksa-nim* (Hon. Dr. Kim), *Kim paksa* (Dr. Kim), *Kim Minho ssi* (Mr. Minho Kim), *Minho ssi* (Mr. Minho), *Kim ssi* (Mr. Kim), *Kim (Minho) kun* (Mr. [Minho] Kim), *Minho kun* (Mr. Minho), *Minho* (Minho!), and *Minho ya* (Minho!). While English honorific titles such as "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Miss," and "Ms." are used primarily to indicate gender roles and marital status, Korean honorific titles are hierarchical. The honorific suffix *-nim* is used for one's superiors or distant adult equals, *ssi* for colleagues or subordinates, and *kun/yang* for much younger inferiors or subordinates.[17] Personal names with the vocative particle (*i* or null) are used to address one's intimate adult friends or one's adult or adolescent students, while those with the particle *(y)a* are for addressing children.

Kinship terms used as address-reference terms are highly diversified. They include terms for older siblings such as *oppa* (female's older brother)*, hyŏng* (male's older brother; rarely, female's older sister)*, nunim* (male's older sister), and *ŏnni* (female's older sister). Furthermore, kinship terms are extensively used to non-kin.

Content words and particles

Korean has a small set of nouns and predicates to refer to a superior or distant adult's family member, possession, and action, as well as a few humble predicates to refer to one's own or an inferior person's action in reference to a superior person – as in *sŏngham* (hon.) vs. *irŭm* (plain) (name), *taek* (hon.) vs. *chip* (plain) (house), *chinji* (hon.) vs. *pap* (plain) (meal), and *yŏnse* vs. *nai* (plain) (age). In addition, two particles have neutral and honorific forms, as in the subject particle *kkesŏ* (hon.) vs. *ka/i* (neutral) and the dative/locative/goal particle *kke* (hon.) vs. *ege/hant'e* (neutral). While the neutral forms are used for both children and adults, the honorific forms are used for adults to indicate special deference.

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[17] Noteworthy is the fact that a married woman uses *abŏnim* (father) and *ŏmŏnim* (mother) to address or refer to her parents-in-law and *abŏji* and *ŏmŏni* or *appa* and *ŏmma* for her own parents.

Subject- and addressee-honorific suffixes

Korean has a suffixal device for subject honorification: employing the suffix *-(ŭ)si/-(ŭ)se* immediately after a predicate stem when the subject referent deserves the speaker's deference – as in *kyosu-nim i ka-**si**-n-da* (the professor is going). Korean also has the addressee-honorific suffix *-(sŭ)p* (*-sŭp* after a consonant; *-p/-m* after a vowel). This suffix appears only with the deferential speech level – as in *i kŭrim ŭn chos-**sŭp**-ni-da* (this picture is good) and *chŏ nŭn ka-**m**-ni-da* (I am going). In *Kim sŏnsaeng-nim ŭn ka-**si**-ŏs-**sŭm**-ni-kka?* (did Professor Kim go?), both the subject referent and the addressee are honored.

Strategic politeness

In addition to honorifics, courtesy is expressed in many strategic ways. If a speech act is performed for the benefit of the addressee, the utterance is usually direct, often utilizing the imperative sentence type, as strong assertion is frequently needed for politeness. Examples are *ŏsŏ o-si-psio* (welcome; literally "come quickly") and *annyŏnghi chumuse-yo* (good night; "sleep peacefully"). If a speech act is not for the benefit of the addressee but for the speaker or somebody else, indirect speech acts are felicitous because direct speech acts are often face-threatening to the addressee's positive self-esteem or to his freedom from imposition. Indirect utterances are used especially when the addressee is a senior or a distant equal or the utterances in question are made for the benefit of the speaker. Note the decreasing degrees of indirectness denoting decreasing degrees of courtesy in both Korean and English:

1. *Sillyeha-mnida man, mun chom yŏrŏ chu-si-gessŏyo?* (Excuse me, but would you please open the door for me?)
2. *Mun chom yŏrŏ chu-si-gessŏ yo?* (Would you please open the door for me?)
3. *Mun chom yŏrŏ chu-se-yo.* (Please open the door for me.)
4. *Mun yŏrŏ chu-se-yo.* (Open the door for me.)
5. *Mun yŏ-se-yo.* (Open the door.)

All these sentences are at the polite speech level and thus may be uttered to an adult. Sentence 5, however, is a sheer command in both Korean and English and thus impolite unless the act of opening the door is for the sake of the addressee. In general, the longer a sentence is, the more indirect and therefore the more polite it is, since more hedges are included. In sentence 1, several hedging devices are involved: the request-introducing

formula *sillyeha-mnida man* (excuse me but); the diminutive *chom* (just; a little; please); the benefactive auxiliary verb *chuda* (to do for); the modal (conjectural) suffix *-ket* (would); and the interrogative sentence type with rising intonation. As in English, use of interrogative sentences for requests has become quite widespread recently.

Many indirect speech acts are idiomatized. One such case is to pose a question to a social superior about his or her name, age, and such. The formula is: *ŏttŏ-k'e toe-se-yo?* (What is . . . ?; literally "How does it become?") – as in the plain form *irŭm i mwŏ yeyo?* (to a child or junior adult) (What is your name?) vs. the polite form *sŏngham i ŏttŏ k'e toe-se-yo?* (to a senior or distant adult) (May I ask your name? – literally "How does your name become?"). Also noteworthy is the productive use of the phrase *kŏt kat'-ayo* (it seems that . . .) in daily interactions – as in *chŏ nŭn mot kal kŏt kat'-ayo* (I may not be able to go) instead of the intended expression *chŏnŭn mot ka-yo* (I am unable to go.) This is a speaker's politeness strategy to tone down the assertion.

Despite the strong contemporary trend toward democratization in all walks of life, Koreans still value traditional hierarchism to a great extent in personal interactions. Moreover, as alluded to in the use of kinship terms to non-kin, honorifics and politeness strategies are also governed by Koreans' collectivistic value orientation. Thus the structure and use of courtesy expressions cannot be properly grasped without understanding Koreans' deep-rooted hierarchical and collectivistic consciousness in contrast to, say, English-speakers' egalitarian and individualistic consciousness.[18]

FORMS, PROSODY, AND THEMES

Korean literature includes works written in literary Chinese and those written in the vernacular. Because of the absence of a writing system of native origin till the mid fifteenth century when the Korean alphabet was invented, the extant poetry from early times was either transcribed in Chinese for

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[18] For more discussion of Korean politeness and honorifics see Juck-Ryoon Hwang, "Role of Sociolinguistics in Foreign Language Education with Reference to Korean and English terms of Address and Levels of Deference" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1975); Choon-hak Cho, *A Study of Korean Pragmatics: Deixis and Politeness* (Hanshin, 1982); Ho-min Sohn, *Linguistic Expeditions* (Hanshin, 1986); Woo-kyu Lee, "Honorifics and Politeness in Korean" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1991); and Suh Cheong-soo, *Kugŏ munpŏp* (Hanyang taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1996). Further readings on various structural aspects of Korean include Hyun Bok Lee, *Korean Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Samuel E. Martin, *A Reference Grammar of Korean* (Rutland: Tuttle, 1992); Suk-Jin Chang, *Korean* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1996); and Sohn, *The Korean Language*.

both its sound and sense (*hyangga*), or in the new alphabet (Koryŏ songs). The linguistic and literary evidence indicates that early in their history Koreans learned to read and write the Chinese script. The bulk of verse and prose was written directly in Chinese in the Chinese literary forms. Almost every Chosŏn-dynasty scholar-official of importance left behind collected works containing verse and prose in Chinese. Some wrote in both Chinese and Korean from the fifteenth century.

<div align="center">POETRY</div>

In traditional Korea, every educated man and woman wrote poetry in literary Chinese – and judging from the extant collected works of individual writers, the amount of poetry they wrote is staggering. The Chinese verse forms include *gushi* (old-style verse), *lüshi* (regulated eight-line verse) – including *pailü* (regulated couplets of unlimited length) – *fu* (rhymeprose), and *ci* (a synonym for *fu* or *sao* [elegy]), with fewer examples of the *ci* (song words or lyric meter) and *yuefu* ballads. The first 22 out of a total of 133 chapters (chs. 23 to 133 cover prose genres) in the *Tong munsŏn* (*Anthology of Korean Literature in Chinese*, 1478) are assigned to poetry:

1	*Ci* (ten examples) and rhymeprose
2–3	Rhymeprose (thirty-five examples)
4–5	Pentasyllabic old-style verse
6–8	Heptasyllabic old-style verse
9–11	Pentasyllabic regulated verse
12–17	Heptasyllabic regulated verse
18	Heptasyllabic regulated couplets
19	Penta- and heptasyllabic quatrain (*jueju*, cut-off lines)
20–21	Heptasyllabic quatrain
22	Heptasyllabic quatrain and hexasyllabic verse (three examples)

<div align="center">OLD-STYLE VERSE</div>

Praised by Yi Kyubo (1168–1241) as possessing remarkable classic purity (without being refined or effete) and evincing a heroic spirit no weakling could approach, the Koguryŏ general Ŭlchi Mundŏk is said to have sent the following to the invading Sui general in 612:

		a b c d e
Your divine plans have plumbed the heavens;	1.	神策究天文
Your subtle reckoning has spanned the earth.	2.	妙算窮地理
You win every battle, your military merit is great.	3.	戰勝功旣高
Why then not be content and stop the war?	4.	知足願云止

Lines 1 and 2 show a syntactic parallelism – a parallel couplet. Lines 3 and 4 do not parallel syntactically (grammatical particles in 3d and 4d). The poet

makes use of intertextual strategies – lines 1–2 allude to a passage in the *Book of Changes*: "Looking upward, we contemplate with its help the signs in the heavens; looking down, we examine the lines of the earth."[19] Line 4a–b alludes to *Daodejing* 44 (see Chapter 4). This poem, as in old-style verse, does not observe the rules of tonal parallelism. Rhyme occurs at the end of each couplet, in lines 2 and 4 in deflected tone, and there is a caesura between the second and third syllables. This poem is an old-style verse, because tones at 1b and 2b are both deflected rather than in opposition as we expect in a regulated verse form.

REGULATED VERSE: QUATRAIN

The following pentasyllabic quatrain, "On a Rainy Autumn Night," is by Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn, who returned to Silla in 874 after twelve years of study and sojourn in Tang China (see Chapter 4). The poem was probably written in his late teens while he was preparing for the Tang civil service examination:

	a b c d e
I only chant painfully in the autumn wind,	1. 秋風惟苦吟
For I have few friends in the wide world.	2. 世路少知音
At third watch, it rains outside.	3. 窗外三更雨
By the lamp my heart flies myriad miles away.	4. 燈前萬里心

While lines 1 and 2 do not match, lines 3 and 4 match grammatically and syntactically. One notes a contrast between outside and inside: outside the window and inside by the lamp; the third watch and a myriad tricents (translated as miles); and the rain outside and his heart inside. Graph 1d in deflected tone sounds important because of its position in the line. "Friends" in line 2d–e (*chiŭm*) refers to Zhong Ziqi (sixth century BC), who could tell the thoughts of Boya playing the zither. After Zhong died, Boya laid aside his zither and never played it again, for he had lost the one true friend who understood his music. A single rhyme occurs at the end of lines 1, 2, and 4 in the level tone. Parallelism in the second couplet engenders a rhetorical rhythm – a rhythm of thought. Despite the highly structured form with complex tonal pattern, the speaker skillfully expresses his innermost feelings by blending emotion and scenery.

The next poem, "Sending Off a Friend" by Chŏng Chisang (d. 1135), is an example of the heptasyllabic quatrain. Lines 1 and 2 do not match, and line 3 introduces a turn by posing a startling question. At first it appears unrelated to the first couplet, but line 4 reveals why this rhetorical question must be

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[19] Richard Wilhelm, *The I Ching or Book of Changes*, trans. Cary F. Baynes, 2 vols. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1950) 1:316.

asked. Couched in terms of impossibility, it does not serve as a closure, but increases tension, especially because the line ends in the deflected tone. The purpose of the question is to pour out the enormity of the speaker's sorrow. Friendship transcends distance and vicissitudes, but the speaker must register the pain of separation. The poem observes the rule in second, fourth, and sixth positions (1–4b, d, f) as well as rhyme positions in lines 2 and 4. A departure from the rule in the first, third, and fifth positions is not considered a violation. End rhyme occurs in lines 1, 2, and 4 in the level tone (aaba):

		a b c d e f g
After a rain on the long dike, grasses are thick.	1.	雨歇長堤草色多
With a sad song I send you off to South Cove.	2.	送君南浦動悲歌
When will Taedong River cease to flow?	3.	大同江水何時盡
Year after year my tears will swell the green waves.	4.	別淚年年添綠波

Both quatrains discussed here observe the standard tonal pattern of Tang "modern-style" poetry.

CI (ELEGY)

Yi Illo's (1152–1220) *ci* "Hwa kwigŏrae sa" harmonizing with Tao Qian's (365–427) "The Return" uses a line of from four to seven syllables that is broken twice in the middle and four times at the end of a line by the insertion of the meaningless particle pronounced in modern Chinese as *xi*.[20] The diction is dense with allusion – for example, to "Li Sao" ("Encountering Sorrow") by Qu Yuan (c. 340–278 BC), *Zhuangzi*, and *Liezi*. "Sanjung sa" ("In the Mountain") by Yi Saek (1328–1396) uses a line of six to eleven syllables, *xi* within or at the end of a line, and alliterating compounds.[21] In "Ae ch'usŏk sa" ("A Lament for an Autumn Evening"), Yi Sungin (1349–1392) uses a line of six to eight syllables with *xi* in the middle or at the end of a line.[22] In this lament the speaker holds an imaginary dialogue with the Jade Emperor and discusses the art of living according to his aspiration.

RHYMEPROSE

Thirty-five examples in the *Anthology* use lines of varying length, some with a prose preface. The diction is florid with extensive use of parallelism and antithesis, allusion, alliteration, assonance, repetition with slight variation, rhyme in every other line. It is descriptive, subjective, or philosophical. The speaker (the poet appears in the third person) in Yi Illo's "Oktang

[20] *TMS* 1:1a.   [21] *TMS* 1:1a–2a.   [22] *TMS* 1:7b–8b.

paek pu" ("Rhymeprose on the Cypress by the Hallim Academy") holds an imaginary dialogue with the tree.[23] In "Pangsŏn pu" ("Freeing the Cicada") by Yi Kyubo, the speaker again holds an imaginary dialogue with a passerby who blames him for starving the spider by freeing the cicada caught in the web.[24] The speaker retorts by saying that the spider is by nature covetous whereas the cicada feeding on dewdrops is clean – and ends with advice to the latter on the art of survival.

SONG WORDS (*CI*)

Because most Korean poets did not speak Chinese and either memorized the rhyme words or relied on the rhyming dictionary they carried in their sleeves, few ventured to write song words to intricate musical patterns. Dating from the eighth century in China and flourishing in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the form's features include prescribed rhyme, tonal sequence, and the use of varying length. "Yanggun kyŏn hwaujak" ("Again Harmonizing with My Two Friends") by Yi Kyubo is written to the tune "Ripples Sifting Sand" (*Langtaosha*).[25] Yi Chehyŏn (1287–1367), who knew spoken Chinese well, wrote "Ŭm maekchu" ("Drinking Barley Wine") to the tune "Partridge Sky" (*Zhugetian*) and composed "Songdo p'algyŏng" ("Eight Scenes of Kaesŏng") to the tune "A Stretch of Cloud over Mount Wu" (*Wushan yiduan yun*).[26]

YUEFU (MUSIC BUREAU) SONGS

The Music Bureau was a government office set up around 120 BC in Han China to collect anonymous folk songs, and gradually the term also began to designate the songs themselves. Later examples written by the literati in the style of such songs were also called music bureau songs, or ballads. These songs are often irregular in form with lines of varying length. The oldest examples were transmitted orally, and the form kept its musical origins with a simple diction free from allusion. Consider, for example, the four-line song the divine person asked the nine chiefs to sing in AD 42 to pray for the appearance of King Suro of Karak, "Song of Kuji" (see Chapter 2), or "Kong mudoha ka" ("Milord, Don't Cross the River") (also called "Konghu in" ["A Medley for the Harp"]) attributed to the wife of a madman who drowned. Based on folk songs current in his day, Yi Chehyŏn wrote nine music bureau songs in heptasyllabic quatrain (see Chapter 6). Kim

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[23] *TMS* 2:9a–10a.   [24] *TMS* 1:5a–b.   [25] *TYC* hujip (later collection) 5:4a.
[26] Yi Chehyon, *Ikchae nango* 10:2a–b and 10a–12a, in *Ikchae chip* (*KMC* 2).

Chongjik (1431–1492) wrote several ballads based on the oral narratives popular in the Kyŏngju area and was followed by such writers as Sim Kwangse (1577–1624), Im Ch'angt'aek (1683–1723), Yi Ik (1681–1763), and others.

FORMS AND PROSODY OF VERNACULAR POETRY

There are four major vernacular poetic forms in traditional Korea: *hyangga* (Silla songs; sixth to tenth centuries); *yŏyo* (Koryŏ songs, also called *sogyo*; eleventh to fourteenth centuries); *sijo* (fifteenth century to the present); and *kasa* (fifteenth to nineteenth centuries). Other poetic forms that flourished briefly include *kyŏnggi-ch'e* songs (fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; see Chapter 4), and the *akchang* (eulogies; fifteenth century). The most important *akchang* is the *Songs of Flying Dragons* (see Chapter 7). Most vernacular lyric is primarily addressed to the ear as song.

Hyangga

It is difficult to generalize the forms and prosody of Silla songs on the basis of extant examples. The four-line "P'ungyo" ("Ode to Yangji," c. 635) is in trimeter lines: 2/2/2; 2/2/2; 2/2/2; 2/3/2. "Ch'ŏyong ka" (Song of Ch'ŏyong, 879) scans as follows: 2/2/2; 3/4; 3/4; 3/4//2/4; 2/4; /2/5; and 3/5. The ten-line song "Ch'an Kip'arang ka" ("Ode to Knight Kip'a," c. 742–765) goes: 3; 3/2; 3/2/6; 4/4//5/3; 2/2/3; 2/5; 3/2/4//2 (interjection)/3/2; 5/3. This song, like all ten-line songs, begins the ninth line with an interjection. The syllable count and meter vary according to how one deciphers the text in *hyangch'al* orthography. Silla songs usually come with prose settings provided by the compiler Iryŏn, but at times he tries to imagine the context in which a song is composed or sung.

Koryŏ songs

Generally two forms are recognized in Koryŏ songs:[27]
Form 1:
1. Each metric segment in a line has two to four syllables, but commonly three.
2. Each line consists of three metric segments, but four segments are possible.
3. There is no set number of stanzas in a song.
4. The refrain occurs either in the middle or at the end of each stanza.

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[27] Chŏng Pyŏnguk, *Chŭngbop'an Hanguk kojŏn siganon* (Singu munhwasa, 1999), pp. 110–111.

5. A song consists of several stanzas.

Form 2:

1. Each metric segment has two or three syllables, but mostly four.
2. Each line consists of either three or four segments, but four segments occur frequently.
3. There is no set number of stanzas in a song.
4. The refrain tends to disappear.
5. A song consists of several stanzas.

The refrains in some songs are meaningless onomatopoeia of the sounds of musical instruments or nonsense jingles: "au tongdong tari" in "Tong-dong" ("Ode to the Seasons") and "yalli yalli yallasyŏng yallari yalla" in "Ch'ŏngsan pyŏlgok" ("Song of Green Mountain").

Sijo

Dating from the end of the fourteenth century, the regular or standard *sijo* is a three-line song generally said to have the following metric pattern:

$$3/4 \quad 4 \quad 3/4 \quad 4$$
$$3/4 \quad 4 \quad 3/4 \quad 4$$
$$3 \quad 5 \quad 4 \quad 3/4$$

Each line consists of four rhythmic groups, with a varying number of syllables in each group. In this book I shall call each rhythmic unit a metric segment, with a minor pause at the end of the second segment and a major pause at the end of the fourth. A deliberate twist or turn is introduced in the first metric segment in the third line. Yun Sŏndo, in his *sijo* sequence *Ŏbu sasi sa* (*The Angler's Calendar*, 1651), introduces a different form (see Chapter 10). There are two other kinds of *sijo*: *ŏt sijo* has one or more syllables in all metric segments except for the first metric segment in the third line (an extra syllable to any metric segments in the third line is rare); *sasŏl sijo* is a form in which more than two metric segments in each line, except for the first in the third line, are added (see Chapter 10). The three-line *sijo* in the original is usually translated as a six-line poem – either all six lines flush left or the even-numbered lines indented to indicate that indented lines continue the nonindented line representing one line in the original (a matter of personal preference). In the past, however, all poetry whether in Chinese or in the vernacular was written or printed in vertical lines from top to bottom without punctuation. One can scan Chinese poetry by following the rhyme marking the line ends and by reading aloud the *sijo* following its prosody.

Kasa

Appearing in the fourteenth century, *kasa*'s features include a lack of stan-
zaic division, a tendency toward description and exposition (at times also
lyricism), and the use of parallel phrases both verbal and syntactic. Its norm
consists of two four-syllable words, or alternating three and four syllables,
that form a unit and are repeated in parallel form. "Sangch'un kok"
("In Praise of Spring") by Chŏng Kŭgin (1401–1481) begins with a line
of 3, 4, 4, and 4 metric segments and ends with a line of 3, 5, 4, and 4. (For
more on different prosody used in the woman's and commoner's *kasa* see
Chapter 11.)

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

On the level of sound, Korean poetry makes use of consonance, alliteration,
and onomatopoeia, but not rhyme. Onomatopoeia includes phonomimes
that mimic natural sounds, such as *tchiktchik* to depict the chirp of a
bird, phenomimes that depict manners of the external world, such as *salsal*
(gently), referring to the soft wind, and psychomimes depicting mental
conditions or states, such as *mesŭkmesŭk* (feel sick). There are at least 4,000
examples of sound symbolism (ideophones), mostly used in reduplicated
form, that function syntactically as adverbs.[28] Simile (stated comparison)
and metaphor (implied comparison) function in Korean poetry as they
do in Chinese and Japanese poetry. Examples of metaphoric transfer are:
"Knight, you are the towering pine, / That scorns frost and ignores snow" in
"Ode to Knight Kip'a," and "The mind is a moonlit autumn field" ("Eleven
Devotional Songs," song 6 by Great Master Kyunyŏ). More explicit com-
parisons use "like" or "as": "I who have yearned for you and wept / Am like
a bird in the hills" (by Chŏng Sŏ between 1151 and 1170), and "On a June
day I am like / A comb cast from a cliff" ("Ode to the Seasons"). *Kasa* tends
to make more use of stated comparison. In "Snowflakes flutter – butterflies
chase flowers; / Ants float – my wine is thick" (Kim Yŏng, fl. 1776–1800),
an implicit connection is drawn between two adjacent objects in a line,
as in Li Bo's (701–762) "The moon descends, a flying heavenly mirror"
("Crossing at Jingmen: A Farewell"). Such connections seem to be based
more on metonymic contiguity than true metaphoric substitution. In this
sense, "truly extended tropes of comparison or substitution"[29] are rare in
Korean poetry, and indeed in other East Asian poetry. When the Knight

[28] Ho-min Sohn, *The Korean Language*, pp. 96–102.
[29] Pauline Yu, "Metaphor and Chinese Poetry," *CLEAR* 3:2 (1981):217.

Kip'a is identified as a "towering pine," the pine is "an icon in a shared cultural code, an icon whose significance has already been established by tradition"[30] (see Chapters 3 and 7). Korean poetry draws its significance from its emblematic imagery, formulas, topics, and other rhetorical devices. Like Chinese and Japanese poets, the Korean poet usually sought out existing analogies and affirmed whatever correlations there were rather than striving to create new ones.

The interaction of speaker and audience is a characteristic of the *sijo* and other poetic genres. Sometimes the lyric speaker addresses a fictional character – like Petrarch's Laura. The role and ethos the speaker assumes is defined by convention, and recurring rhetorical situations often elicit standardized expectations and responses from the audience. The recurrence of certain topics, images, and themes indicates not only the poet's awareness of immediate concerns and audience preferences but also the mode of his composition. In an age that was intent upon the more perfect expression of what had been said before, originality was a confession of poverty, not a sign of wealth. While using the resources of other poets to reaffirm cultural values that engage the lively concerns of their audience, successful poets were able to find their own voice by a skillful use of poetic techniques at their disposal.

FAVORED TOPICS

Spring and autumn seem to have been the favored poetic seasons. Nature's spontaneous profusion, with a catalogue of seasonal images, is often the subject of spring poems – peach, plum, apricot, pear, green willows, and graceful birds flirting and singing. Cherry blossoms, so prominent in classic Japanese poetry as an ideal seasonal image, are absent. Autumn poems suggest the beauty of the season of dying as it lingers, passes, and finally gives way to the season of desolation and death. Nature is evoked for its metaphorical power to intensify a contrast or a parallel: bright moon, autumn wind, cold river, sleeping fish set against the sadness of absence and longing; a brief moment of worldly glory set against the autumnal beauty; the cry of a cricket or a goose as a symbol of the speaker's state of mind; a melancholy dusk; a lone traveler spending a sleepless night in a moonlit garden. Some identify autumn with the onset of old age and decay. The prevalence of autumn as the favorite season – as a mood and subject of

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[30] Ibid., 219. Also see Michelle Yeh, "Metaphor and *Bi*: Western and Chinese Poetics," *Comparative Literature* 39:3 (1987):237–254.

poetry – and the deliberate cultivation of the dark and mysterious, the sad and veiled, the fleeting and intangible as the highest aesthetic ideals were responsible for autumn poems that fuse the "now" of summer's warmth and glory with the "then" of winter's cold and desolation in order to capture the "evanescence of a treasured now," the awful transition between being and nothingness.[31] There are few happy spring or autumn poems, however, because in spring we are reminded that our spring will never return and in autumn we are reminded of impending death. Some seasonal images that develop into topics in East Asian poetry seem to have grown on tradition rather than in nature.

There are, as well, poems on the happiness of rural retirement in both Chinese and Korean. Topics range from modest sufficiency (which appears metonymically in the form of a simple dwelling, vegetarian diet, homespun clothes, and uncomfortable bedding) to the cultivation of the True ("Can you fathom my joy?"), to the pleasant place remote in time and space (such as the first Chinese literary *locus amoenus*, Peach Blossom Spring), to mountains as positive images and the fisherman as sage. A conjunction of such images as the gentle breeze, aimless clouds, homing bird, flowing spring, trees and plants in the courtyard – especially pine, bamboo, and chrysanthemum – and a thatched roof girt with hills and waters – like grass, shade, and water in the topos of *locus amoenus* beginning with the seventh idyll of Theocritus – became the favorite device for indicating withdrawal from the active world, either in panegyrics to innocence, simplicity, and contentment or in polemical-satiric attacks on the hypocrisy of the court. It signals the acceptance of solitude as the only dramatic resolution of the perennial conflict between society and individual and as a fit metaphor of the landscape of the poet's regenerated mind. The retired scholar or poet-recluse is content to live in obscurity and poverty, the *sine qua non* of contemplative life. Poetry of praise addressed to a solitary recluse, Daoist or Buddhist, commends the subject for his rejection of worldly values in favor of a life of repose and contemplation in nature and final attainment of a complete harmony with nature – he is invisible, vanishing behind clouds and mist, occasionally leaving behind a footprint on a rock or the moss. Such homage, considered the highest praise, transmutes the subject into a symbol, a fragrance, and radiance. This topic seems to be better suited to poems in Chinese than in the vernacular. The poet's commitment to nature demands a commitment to the finality of death. Usually, however, the poet

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[31] Peter H. Lee, *Celebration of Continuity: Themes in Classic East Asian Poetry* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 59.

accepts the terror of discontinuity as "the ultimate homecoming," a return to the infinite flux. Whether our criterion is that of the distance between human beings and nature or that of people's willingness to adapt themselves to the natural world, Korean nature poetry allied with the discovery of the individual seeks to understand life in relation to the patterns of nature and the final acceptance of the human condition.

The tone of most love lyrics is retrospective. As a result, the pathos of separation and pangs of desertion rather than the pursuit of passion in the present – fulfillment and ecstasy – are recurrent themes. Such topics as courtship, the ladder of love, *carpe diem*, and *carpe florem* are almost neglected. The social position of women – and the Confucian morality in which passion is disruptive and unworthy of serious concern in refined literature – had a lasting impact on the development of love poetry in China and Korea. This explains, as well, the relative absence of praise of the woman's body (*blason*) and the elevation of the beloved's beauty as the manifestation of an inner perfection (hence no eternizing conceit). Seldom is love presented as ennobling or purifying; nor is it advanced as a mode of knowledge, spiritual development, or an analogue of divine love.[32] Most poets adopt an indirect, retrospective stance with an emphasis on parting, desertion, and neglect, and the resulting physical and mental anguish and dilemma ("odi et amo" [I hate and I love]; Catullus, song 85). Dream visions and metamorphoses are recurrent topics. Moving love lyrics were, however, produced by anonymous poets or women. Unlike the ladies in Latin love elegies and English sonnet sequences, in Korea it was women who conferred lasting fame on themselves. Time and again the speaker drives home the disjunction between peace in nature and turmoil in the heart. Indeed, the sadness of separation was thought to be more poetic than the satisfaction of fulfillment.

A number of poems on the topic of friendship can be found in Chinese. All learned men in Korea (as in China) aspired to official careers and were subjected to changes of fortune and policy. The speaker in propemptic poems either sends his friend off or himself takes leave of his friend on account of a new appointment, exile, withdrawal, or retirement – all characteristic patterns of the life of a civil servant. Such image clusters as flowing water, a solitary boat, lonely clouds, the setting sun, a long wind, the willow tree, and a cup of wine, with an emphasis on distance, gain resonance in a society where the moral, intellectual, and aesthetic values of friendship had a

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[32] For a different view see Patrick M. Thomas, "The Troubadour, the Shaman, and the Palace Lady: The Crosscurrents of Desire," *Comparative Criticism* 18 (1996):127–153.

cultural force. Moreover, the vagaries of court life often led officials to return home as a gesture of moral protest, a renunciation of a worldly career, or a return to nature. Parting, longing for the absent friend, dream visions, and the joy of music and wine to celebrate a reunion are recurrent themes as well. Called a "care-dispelling thing" that exorcises all our concerns, wine is a symbol of release from anxiety, fear, change, chilly winds, or signs of snow. Beautiful scenes of nature or feelings of zest call for wine and friends also. The archetype of Korean drinkers is Li Bo and occasionally Liu Ling (c. 225–280) and Su Shi (1037–1101). The associated images of moon, flowers, wine, music, and friend recall the Horatian ingredients of a banquet: wine, rose blossoms, and perfume (*Odes* 3:3:13–16). Seasonal imagery plays an important role in poems of parting and longing. In such poems, the "I will follow you to the end of the world" topic is usually absent. The speaker, however, in an effort to compliment his friend, sends him a painting of autumn sound, a handful of moonlight, or nature itself.

Korean images of time are drawn mostly from nature – either to compare the transient nature of human existence with the cycle of the seasons or to drive home an ironic contrast between linear human existence and the cyclical patterns of nature. Of these perhaps the most common emblem is the dying flower that underscores the ephemeral character of all existence. The concept of time as transience also occurs through the images of an unstable state of active life ruled by time, the ruins of monuments, or the irreparable past. Time's relentless movement is represented by the metaphor of the river – both as the context and condition of existence and in its utter indifference to human enterprise. Such time imagery reflects the Korean poet's conception of mortality in the world of temporality, whether it is ruled by a Confucian heaven that controls cosmic order, human history, and personal events, by the Daoist's naturalistic Way, or by the Buddhist's karmic retribution. The persistent mood is one of calm acceptance, but there is neither contempt for this world nor espousal of the other world.

Nature offered moving metaphors not only of transience but of permanence. Poets found consolation in contemplating the virtues of the pine and chrysanthemum or the "four gentlemen": plum, orchid, bamboo, and chrysanthemum, all of which figure prominently in East Asian poetry and painting. Armed with the Daoist philosophy of nondiscrimination and the utility of inutility (nonaction), poets were happiest when they contemplated harmony with nature or enjoyed the good life with friends. Friends and wine can drive away care, northern winds, frost, and snow. A man is not old if he can still enjoy flowers, laugh with friends, and exchange

cups. Indeed, what counts is the quality of life, the moments of experience, how one accepts change and embraces death. Above all, poets transcend time by their acts of celebration and by their faith in poetry. When a poet contemplates and communicates with the tradition, he places himself in a vital relation to past and future. His fidelity to the art, his allegiance to the tradition, is an act of transcending imperious time. Indeed, the poetic contemplation of the past is a means of combating oblivion, for the names and events of the past unsung will be lost and forgotten. As poets succeed poets and reaffirm the place of poetry in life, what they celebrate is the hope of poetry, a denial of mortality and change.