

Japanese Learning of Korean Culture through Korean Classical Novels

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Abstract

This study examines how Japanese scholars as well as the public accepted Korean classical novels from the latter part of the Joseon dynasty until the 1920s. During this time, Japanese used translated and published Korean classical novels to learn and understand the Korean language and culture. The first person who transcribed Korean classical novels was Amenomori Hoshu 雨森芳洲, an interpreter who also learned the Korean language by transcribing classical novels such as Sukhyangjeon (The Tale of Sukhyang) and Yi Baek-gyeong jeon (The Tale of Yi Baek-gyeong). He also used Korean classical novels when he was teaching Korean to Japanese apprentices training to become interpreters. Korean classical novels were used continuously as Korean learning materials by Japanese scholars, interpreters, students, and so on. As the interest in Korean classical novels increased, Choe Chung jeon (The Tale of Choe Chung), Im Gyeong-eop jeon (The Tale of Im Gyeong-eop), and Chunhyangjeon (The Tale of Chunhyang), among others, were translated and published. Scholars such as Nakarai Tosui 桃水野史, Takahashi Toru 高橋亨, and Hosoi Hajime 細井肇 continued to translate Korean classical novels. These scholars also published several classical novels up until the 1920s. They contain a total of 15 pieces, which are representative examples of Korean classical novels. Hosoi claimed that learning Korean classical novels was important to learning more about the Joseon dynasty. After receiving Korean classical novels through the transcription, translation, and publication process, Japanese scholars studied them earnestly. This article systematically traces this early period when Korean classical novels first became the subject of study among Japanese.

Keywords: Korean classical novels, Amenomori, *Sukhyangjeon*, Korean culture, transcription, publication, translation

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Introduction

The history of Korean classical novels begins with *Geumo sinhwa* (New Stories from Mount Geumo), written in Sino-Korean characters by Kim Si-seup (1435-1493) at the end of the fifteenth century. Novel writing became more active by the end of the seventeenth century, when novels written in the Korean script, following the creation and introduction of Hangeul, emerged as a popular genre read by many people. As Korean classical novels started circulating more widely, foreigners also became interested in them. An example is the newly discovered *Jiuyunlou* 九雲樓 (The Cloud Pavilion of Nine), a full-length novel adapted by a writer from the Qing dynasty of China, which was a retelling of the Korean classical novel *Gunmong* (The Cloud Dream of Nine) (Yang 2011). This was possible because *Gunmong* was imported and distributed to the Qing dynasty, due to the rising interest in Korean classical novels. By the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, lists of Korean classical novels were made by foreign scholars (Courant 1894) and translations of some works were carried out (Allen 1899; Gale 1917-1918).

The Japanese also showed a strong interest in Korean classical novels, particularly as they became interested in studying the Korean language. The Japanese study of the Korean language was initiated by Amenomori Hoshu 雨森芳洲, an interpreter of Korean language. Amenomori studied and taught Korean by writing a series of Korean textbooks such as *Korinsuchi* 交隣須知 (Essential Knowledge for Relations with Neighboring Countries). However, Korean classical novels soon became the most important tool for Amenomori to learn the language. The status of Korean classical novels was increasingly elevated as a trusted resource for understanding Korean customs and culture, beyond simply learning the Korean language. The Japanese attempt to learn Korean culture through Korean classical novels eventually led to the translation and publication of Korean classical novels in Japan.

This study focuses on the Japanese interest in Korean classical novels and covers the period from Japan's first encounter of Korean classical novels to the early stage of learning and the acceptance of Korean culture

through translation and publication. Therefore, studies on Korean classical novels by Japanese scholars who were in Korea during the Japanese colonial era, such as those by Takahashi Toru 高橋亨,¹ have been excluded from this discussion. The studies conducted in Korea during the colonial rule were greatly conditioned by the period's milieu and political doctrines. Japanese scholars accepting Korean classical novels and culture in association with the colonial rule will not be the focus in this study since comprehensive discussions on the controversies and complexities surrounding this issue are already available.² This study instead looks at the earlier period when the Japanese first became aware of Korean classical novels and began to earnestly study them.³

There have been intermittent studies on the early Japanese encounters with Korean classical novels. Cho Hee-Woong and Matsubara's (1997) study on how Amenomori learned Korean by transcribing *Sukhyangjeon* (The Tale of Suk-hyang) and *Yi Baek-gyeong jeon* (The Tale of Yi Baek-gyeong) was the first to discuss the usage of Korean classical novels. However, this study only reveals the creation date of *Sukhyangjeon* and does not refer to the learning of Korean culture. How the Japanese introduced Korean classical novels to learn Korean culture was examined by Jung

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1. After becoming a professor at the law school of Keijo Imperial University in 1917, Takahashi studied Joseon's ideas and culture, such as Confucianism and Buddhism as well as poems and novels. Among them, "Chosen bungaku kenkyu: chosen no shosetsu" (A Study of Joseon Literature: The Novels of Joseon), in *Nihon bungaku koza* (Lecture Notes for Japanese Literature), written in 1932, is a typical research finding on Korean classical novels. After Takahashi, Korean literature began to emerge as an object of study, and not just an object of learning and understanding.
 2. Many studies abound on Koreanology by Takahashi. Among them, see Lee and Ryu (2012) for main points about his study on Joseon literature.
 3. The range of discussion is from the 1700s to the 1920s. This period was the late Joseon to the early modern period in Korea and span the Edo 江戸 (1603-1867), Meiji 明治 (1867-1912), and Taisho 大正 (1912-26) eras in Japan. The Korean culture that the Japanese of the Edo to the Taisho era encountered was the language and novels of the Joseon dynasty. This study, however, has used current terms such as "Japanese" to refer to the people of the Meiji and the Taisho eras and "Korean culture" for the culture of the Joseon dynasty.

Byung Sul (2005). Jung's study focused on Japanese views on Joseon based on *Choe Chung jeon* (The Tale of Choe Chung) and *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* (The Tale of Im Gyeong-eop) and claims that the Japanese put greater stress on these particular texts in order to understand the essence of Korean culture. In addition, Jung also introduced how *Sukhyangjeon* was used as a Korean language text and reasons that the Japanese preferred Korean classical novels in learning Korean (2004). Hur Kyoung Jin (2001) also closely investigated the work and life of transcriber Hashimoto Soyoshi 橋本彰美, further contributing to the study of Japanese transcriptions of Korean classical novels.

Other studies have focused on the translation and publication process. The first Korean classical novel published in Japan was *Choe Chung jeon*, as revealed by Yu Tak-Il (1989). He discovered that *Choe Chung jeon* was printed in both Korean and Japanese scripts and argued that the Japanese used it to learn Korean. As discussed by Lee Bok Kyu and Kim Giseo (1991), the first Korean classical novel translated into Japanese was *Im Gyeong-eop jeon*. They believed that the Japanese translated *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* into Japanese to study Korean culture in-depth and not just as a text to learn the Korean language. Following *Im Gyeong-eop jeon*, translations of Korean classical novels were continued by Nakarai Tosui 桃水野史, Takahashi Toru 高橋亨, and Hosoi Hajime 細井肇, among others.⁴

These studies have investigated the transcription, translation, publication, and other related processes of Korean classical novels in Japan, yet the intentions of those involved have not been extensively analyzed because the discussion has been sporadic, lacking systematization and focus. Therefore, this study will systematically examine the first stage of the Japanese acceptance of Korean classical novels by using new ancillary data and will also discuss how the transcription, translation, and publication of Korean classical novels were carried out for the sake of cultural study.

4. Studies on this have been done by Kim, Kim, and Shin (2003), Sakurai (2010), H. Kwon (2007, 2008), and S. Park (2009, 2010).

Learning Korean Language through Transcribing Korean Classical Novels

Amenomori took the initiative to learn Korean, travelling between Tsushima island in Japan and the Waegwan 倭館 (Japanese Residence) in Busan in Korea, and training Korean interpreters, thus being deemed the best Korean educator of the time. In 1727, the Japanese government established Haneosa 韓語詞, a Korean language learning center in Tsushima. Amenomori proposed its establishment and he taught a Korean apprentice the who entered Haneosa. He also selected and dispatched outstanding students to the Waegwan. The apprentices sent to the Waegwan learned the Korean language at an elementary level, as well as the Korean pronunciation of Chinese characters from a Joseon man through *Yuhap* 類合 (Textbook for Chinese Characters), an introductory classification of elementary Chinese characters in the Joseon dynasty, or *Sipalsa ryak* 十八史略 (Summary of the Eighteen Histories), an elementary level book on Chinese history. Interpreters were trained through this process and Amenomori supervised the training program. The following statements disclose Amenomori's efforts and accomplishments in learning Korean:

- (1) When I was thirty-five years old, I went to Joseon and observed it as both a *champansa* (diplomat sent to inform Korea of Japanese situations) and a *doseonju* (ship owner). I thought that diplomacy could not be achieved if an interpreter with no knowledge of the Joseon language was dispatched, so I started learning the Joseon language, studying under a person with fluency in the language as soon as I returned to Tsushima. The next year, at the age of thirty-six, I went to Joseon again and stayed there for two years, writing a book of *Korinsuchi* 交隣須知 (Essential Knowledge for Relations with Neighboring Countries), a book of *Yunenkuhu* 酉年工夫 (A Study in the Year of the Wood Rooster), five books of *Otsuyuzatsuroku* 乙酉雜錄 (A Miscellaneous Record in the Year Rooster), six books of *Jowaroku* 常話錄 (Daily Dialogues), and three books of *Kanchokoji genkai* 勸懲故事諺解 (Annotations of Didactic Tales). I

went to the place where the interpreters stayed, in order to learn the language, transcribing two books of *Shukukoden* 淑香傳 (The Tale of Sukhyang) and a book of *Rihakukeiden* 李白慶傳 (The Tale of Yi Baek-gyeong jeon). When it rained, I used to call on a *sumun gungwan* (gateway guard) or an interpreter for language learning.⁵

- (2) Guidance should be given by stages, from the following three books in order: *Butsumeisatsu* 物名冊 (Book of the Names of Things), *Kangosatsuyo* 韓語撮要 (Essentials of Korean Language), and *Shukukoden*. A notebook should be prepared for young people who cannot do dictation, to write down what has been taught on their behalf. Moreover, the meaning of the aforementioned books and pronunciation ought to be corrected with the help of Joseon people, whereby the clarity and obscurity, and highs and lows of pronunciation are to be completely accurate.⁶

Based on the above quotations, resources used by Amenomori in learning Korean language can be classified into the following two categories:

1. Practical books: *Korinsuchi* (Essential Knowledge for Relations with Neighboring Countries), *Yunenkuhu* (A Study in the Year of the Wood Rooster), *Otsuyuzatsuroku* (A Miscellaneous Record in the Year of the Wood Rooster), *Jowaroku* (Daily Dialogues), *Kanchokojigenkai* (Annotations of Didactic Tales), *Butsumeisatsu* (Book of the Names of Things), *Kangosatsuyo* (Essentials of Korean Language), *Zenichidojin* (Things Everybody Must Learn), *Ringotaiho* (An Authorized Japanese Reader Introducing Our Neighbor's Language), *Shojoroku* (Records on Writings and Documents), and *Jodan* (Daily Words)⁷

5. “某義三十五歲之時，參判使都船主ニ而朝鮮へ初罷渡。彼地之様子令見聞候處，重而信使有之候節，朝鮮詞不存候而者，御用可難弁候と心付候付，罷歸候已後早速朝鮮言葉功者之衆下ニ稽古いたし，翌三十六歲之時，朝鮮江罷渡丸二年令逗留，交隣須知一冊，酉年工夫一冊，乙酉雜錄五冊，常話錄六冊，勸懲故事診解三冊仕立。其外淑香傳二，李白瓊傳一冊，自分ニ寫之，毎日坂之下へ參り令稽古。雨天之節者守門軍官又ハ通事を呼相勤候” (Amenomori 1982, 308).

6. “物名冊。韓語撮要。淑香傳，此三部段段ニ指南可被致候，若輩者自身ニ覺書も不罷成者へへ，銘銘帳面をとちさせ置，毎日被教候所を書付，可被相渡候，尤各義兼而朝鮮人へ右之書物得と被讀書，清濁高低少の違無之様ニ指南可被致事” (Amenomori 1982, 25).

7. Among these practical books, *Korinsuchi* is a widely known textbook with manuscripts

2. Novels: *Shukukoden* (The Tale of Sukhyang), *Rihakukeiden* (The Tale Yi Baek-gyeong).

The Japanese used the listed practical books as textbooks to learn the Korean language in stages. Recently, a Korean language textbook called *Sekiindan* 惜陰談 (Secret Conversations) was discovered. This textbook was written between 1803 and 1854 in a format allowing Korean and Japanese interpreters to ask questions to one another (J. Park 2011). Yet what is notable in the record of Amenomori is the fact that Korean classical novels were used as Korean language textbooks.

The year 1703 was the early period when the Japanese first began to learn Korean, and Korean classical novels are thus noteworthy for being used as Korean language textbooks at that time. Amenomori studied Korean through *Sukhyangjeon* and *Yi Baek-gyeong jeon* for two years when he first came to Korea in 1703, as indicated by the phrase, “[t]he next year, at the age of thirty-six” in passage 1 above. As mentioned above, *Sukhyangjeon* is a Korean classical novel written in Hangeul. Yet the content of *Yi Baek-gyeong jeon* is unknown because it no longer exists today. Nonetheless, it can be assumed that it was written in Hangeul because Amenomori used it as a Korean language textbook. Moreover, given that “*jeon* 傳” (one’s life story) was added to the name of the main character in the title, *Yi Baek-gyeong jeon* can be assumed to be a Korean classical novel.

In passage 2 above, *Sukhyangjeon* is also mentioned as a textbook. In light of this, *Sukhyangjeon* was likely a representative work used for learning basic Korean language skills. A record by Kwon Seop (1671-1759), a prominent writer of Joseon, proves that *Sukhyangjeon* was used as a Korean language textbook for the Japanese. During his trip around the southern

and printings in both Korea and Japan. *Yunenkuhu* is a collection of old Korean stories, and *Kanchokoji genkai* is like *Zenichidojin*. *Kanchokoji* was originally a Chinese book, yet Amenomori translated parts of it into Korean and Japanese, which were later called *Kanchokoji genkai* and *Zenichidojin*, respectively. Other than this information, no further details have been specified about its features. For more details on *Yunenkuhu*, *Kanchokoji genkai*, and *Zenichidojin*, see B. Jung (2001, 72).

area of Korea in 1731, Kwon Seop happened to read *Sukhyangjeon*, recommended by a *daegwan* (diplomatic official) at the Waegwan in Busan. He asked the official how the novel was used, and the official said that it was used for learning Korean.⁸ The novel *Sukhyangjeon*, which was used by Amenomori for his personal study and for educating others, was transmitted to Japan and there are now different versions of *Sukhyangjeon*.⁹ Among them are two versions of *Sukhyangjeon* preserved by Sim Su-gwan's family in Naeshirogawa, Kagoshima: one is a Korean-Chinese version with Japanese translations, and another one is written Hangeul along with Chinese translations.¹⁰ The reason that *Sukhyangjeon* was widely used as a Korean textbook in the early period is due to its easy vocabulary and the high proportion of pure Korean words incorporated in the text.¹¹

The following list shows a record of Amenomori's work, which also mentions *Choe Chung jeon*, *Sukhyangjeon*, *Okgyori*, and *Im Gyeong-eop jeon*:

Zenichidojin (Things Everybody Must Learn), *Korinsuchi* (Essential Knowledge for Relations with Neighboring Countries), *Ringotaiho* (An Authorized Japanese Reader Introducing Our Neighbor's Language), *Saichyuden* (The Tale of Choe Chung), *Shukukoden* (The Tale of Suk-

8. “代官送一倭，恩要入其室，室中淨潔，架上有古文眞寶 諺書淑香傳，余問淑香傳何用，曰‘欲習知本國方言 而置之矣’” (“A *daegwan* sent a Japanese person and asked me to enter a room. In the clean room, I could see *Guwenzhenbao* 古文眞寶 [Precious Treasury of Ancient Letters] and *Eonseo sukhyangjeon* [*Sukhyangjeon* in Hangeul] on the shelf. I asked the official how *Sukhyangjeon* was used, and he said, ‘I put it there for learning a dialect of Joseon country’”) (Kwon [n.d.] 1938, 33-34).

9. At present, versions have been preserved by Sim Su-gwan's family in Kyoto University and in Tsukuba University.

10. In the process of identifying the creation date of *Sukhyangjeon*, Cho and Matsubara (1997) have already studied the use of *Sukhyangjeon* as a Korean textbook for the Japanese and about *Sukhyangjeon* preserved in Japan.

11. Regarding the utility of Korean words in *Sukhyangjeon*, H. Jung (1994, 57) argues that “the literary use of Korean words was effectively realized by accepting a wide range of vocabularies and writing styles used by the low-class people.” B. Jung (2004, 107-108) also points out that *Sukhyangjeon* is characterized by a frequent use of informal vocabularies, a large proportion of conversation, and a simple style of writing.

hyang), *Kyokukyori* (The Two Fair Cousins), *Rinkeigyoden* (The Tale of Im Gyeong-eop), *Shojoroku* 書狀錄 (Records on Writings and Documents), and *Jodan* 常談 (Daily Words), written in Joseon language.¹²

Amenomori stayed in Korea from 1702 to 1705, and returned again in 1729. His studies of *Choe Chung jeon*, *Okgyori*, and *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* seemed to have transpired in 1729. In sum, the Japanese utilized Korean classical novels to learn Korean language and Amenomori was a leader among Korean interpreter who studied in this manner. Based on the present record, the books used by Amenomori for learning Korean were *Sukhyangjeon*, *Yi Baek-gyeong jeon*, *Choe Chung jeon*, and *Im Gyeong-eop jeon*, among others.¹³

The basic forms of learning Korean can be seen in passages 1 and 2. In passage 1, Amenomori said that he studied Korean by transcribing *Sukhyangjeon* and *Yi Baek-gyeong jeon*. When he taught others, he had them take down dictation and wrote down the day's lessons for them. The basic form of learning was thus to write and memorize the script of a textbook. In addition, taking passage 2 into account, this work was supplemented with the correction of meaning or pronunciation through the help of Koreans.

After Amenomori, the history of learning Korean language through Korean classical novels continued with the famous Japanese interpreter Oda Ikugoro 小田幾五郎. He studied Korean through Hangeul novels, going back and forth between Tsushima in Japan and the Waegwan in Busan. Many of the Hangeul novels that he studied at the time have been preserved by his descendants (B. Jung 2005, 29). Oda wrote *Shoshokibun* 象胥記聞 (Diplomats' Travelogue) in 1794 and the section on Joseon novels contains thirteen Hangeul novels. Given the fact that most of the novels written here were used for Korean textbooks in the field of education there-

12. “朝鮮語 全一道人(都詞ナリ) 交隣須知 隣語大方 崔忠傳 淑香傳 玉嬌梨 林慶業傳 書狀錄 常談” (Fukushima and Okaue 1990, 5). All these texts are translations from Korean, published in the Japanese *kana* 假名 scripts.

13. *Okgyori* is a Hangeul novel translated from its original text in Chinese.

Table 1. List of Hangeul Novels Used for Japanese to Learn Korean from the Early Eighteenth Century to the End of the Nineteenth Century

Subject	Period	Works
Amenomori	1703-1729 ca.	<i>Choe Chung jeon</i> , <i>Im Gyeong-eop jeon</i> , <i>Okgyori</i> , <i>Sukhyangjeon</i> , and <i>Yi Baek-gyeong jeon</i>
Oda	1794 ca.	<i>Choe Chung jeon</i> , <i>Choe Hyeon jeon</i> , <i>Guunmong</i> , <i>Im janggun chungnyeol jeon</i> , <i>Jang Bak jeon</i> , <i>Jang Pung-un jeon</i> , <i>Okgyori</i> , <i>Samgukji</i> , <i>Sassi jeon</i> , <i>So Dae-seong jeon</i> , <i>Sounjeon</i> , <i>Sukhyangjeon</i> , and <i>Yi Baek-gyeong jeon</i>
Busan Joseon Eohakso	1873-1880	<i>Choe Chung jeon</i> , <i>Chunhyangjeon</i> , <i>Imjimmok</i> , <i>Im Gyeong-eop jeon</i> , <i>Okgyori</i> , and <i>Sukhyangjeon</i>
Department of Joseon Language at the Tokyo Foreign Language University	1880	Elementary class: <i>Changseon gamuirok</i> , <i>Guunmong</i> , <i>Sassi namjeonggi</i> , and <i>Sukhyangjeon</i> Advanced class: <i>Choe Chung jeon</i> , <i>Jang Gyeong jeon</i> , <i>Okgyori</i> , and <i>Im Gyeong-eop jeon</i>

Sources: Amenomori (1982), Fukushima and Okaue (1990), Oda ([1794] 2005), and B. Jung (2005).

after,¹⁴ it can be surmised that Oda indeed utilized the novels in learning the Korean language. Over time, Hangeul novels were used for learning Korean language at the Joseon Eohakso (Korean Language Institute) in the Waegwan in Busan and they were included in courses for the Department of Joseon Language at Tokyo Foreign Language University. The use of Hangeul novels in learning the Korean language, starting from the time

14. Among the thirteen works mentioned by Oda, *Guunmong*, *Im janggun chungnyeol jeon*, *Choe Chung jeon*, *Sassi jeon*, *Sukhyangjeon*, *Okgyori*, and *Yi Baek-gyeong jeon* were used as Korean textbooks later at the Joseon Eohakso and in the Department of Joseon Language at Tokyo Foreign Language University.

of Amenomori to when the novels were incorporated into courses at Tokyo Foreign Language University, has been organized in Table 1 above. According to the table, seventeen different Hangeul novels were used by the Japanese in learning the Korean language between 1703 and 1880. With the exception of *Okgyori* and *Samgukji*, both of which are translations of Chinese novels, fifteen works are Korean classical novels.

Along with language study, the Japanese transcription of Korean classical novels also indicates their aims to understand the culture and customs of Korea. Presently, thirteen Korean classical novels stamped with the name of Hashimoto Soyoshi are preserved in the Yenching Library at Harvard University.¹⁵ Korean classical novels were transcribed between 1894 and 1901 when Hashimoto lived in Korea. He learned the Korean language in order to work as an interpreter and also taught the Japanese language to Koreans while he stayed at a Japanese *seodang* (local private school) within the Waegwan.¹⁶ He also transcribed *Jungsan mangwol jeon* (The Tale of a Full Moon at Mt. Jungsan), a different version of *Tokkijeon* (The Tale of the Rabbit). Hashimoto's note in a marginal space of the book says, "Its nickname is *Jungsan mangwol jeon* and its original title is *Tokkijeon*," which indicates his comprehensive knowledge of Korean classical novels. Hashimoto's ability to transcribe Korean classical novels came from a tradition of learning Korean language through *Korinsuchi* and Korean classical novels.¹⁷ The educational method of the Joseon Eohakso

15. They are as follows: *Byeol jubu jeon* (The Tale of Rabbit and Terrapin), *Chunhyangjeon*, *Sim Cheong jeon* (The Tale of Sim Cheong), *Yusaengjeon* (The Tale of a Yusaeng), *Yuriguk simssi jeon* (The Tale of Lady Sim from Yuri)—a different version of *Sim Cheong jeon*—*Yi Jinsa jeon* (The Tale of Yi Jinsa), *Bakssi jeon* (The Tale of Lady Bak), *Jungsan mangweol jeon* (The Tale of a Full Moon at Mt. Jungsan), *Jin Dae-bang jeon* (The Tale of Jin Dae-bang), *Heungbu jeon* (The Tale of Heungbu and Nolbu), *Dongseongi* (The Tale of Dongseon), *Okdanchun jeon* (The Tale of Okdanchun), and *Min Si-yeong jeon* (The Tale of Min Si-yeong). These were all photo-printed and introduced to Korea. For the photo-prints, see S. Lee (1998).

16. For the past of Hashimoto, see Hur (2001).

17. Yenching Library has a printed version of *Korinsuchi* (1883) with Hashimoto's ownership stamp and a manuscript of *Korinsuchi*, which indicates that Hashimoto studied the Korean language through *Korinsuchi* (Hur 2001).

offers evidence to the fact that the Japanese considered Korean classical novels not only as important tools for learning the Korean language but also for understanding Korean culture. There are several instances in which learners of the Korean language in the Joseon Eohakso were asked to translate *Choe Chung jeon*, *Im Gyeong-eop jeon*, *Sukhyangjeon*, *Chunhyangjeon*, *Okgyori*, and *Imjinnok* (Records of the Year of Imjin) with the aim of understanding Korean customs.¹⁸ In short, the Japanese utilized Korean classical novels for learning the Korean language, and the use of Korean classical novels gradually developed into a method for understanding Korean culture. Yet the learning of Korean culture through Korean classical novels was probably activated by the publishing or translating of Korean classical novels.

Learning Korean Culture through Publishing and Translating Korean Classical Novels

Korinsuchi, which had been widely used as a Korean textbook, was handed down in the form of a manuscript after Amenomori compiled it in 1703. In 1881 and 1883, it was published in Hangeul type as a printed book by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. What is noteworthy, however, is that *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* and *Choe Chung jeon* were published with the same type that the ministry used to publish *Korinsuchi* (Yu 1989, 373-383). It is significant that the Japanese government was directly involved in publishing Korean classical novels. The books officially published by the government had high reliability and importance. *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* was published in 1881 and *Choe Chung jeon* in 1883; these printed versions were aimed at helping the Japanese acquire and read them more easily.

Yet why were *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* and *Choe Chung jeon* chosen for printing among the fifteen works used by the Japanese in learning Kore-

18. “又生徒は朝鮮風習の一端を知る可く、而して翻譯の資料となす可く、崔忠傳 林慶業傳 淑香傳 春香傳 玉嬌梨 壬辰錄等を研究したものである” (Oomagari 1990, 13).

an? As earlier mentioned, *Sukhyangjeon* was the most famous Korean textbook used by Amenomori and the Department of Joseon Language at Tokyo Foreign Language University, yet it was not issued as a printed book. The reason can be found in the setting of the novel. While *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* and *Choe Chung jeon* are novels set in Korea, *Sukhyangjeon* is set in China. Regardless of the quality of the novel in terms of language and content, it would be difficult to publish a novel set in China and regard it as a Korean novel.

Among the fifteen works of Korean classical novels that the Japanese studied, only *Choe Chung jeon*, *Im Gyeong-eop jeon*, *Chunhyangjeon*, and *Imjinnok* depicted Korean settings while the rest of them were set in China. Why, then, were *Chunhyangjeon* and *Imjinnok* not published? *Chunhyangjeon* would not have been considered a pure novel in content since it was based on *pansori* (epic narrative songs) and included many songs. Therefore, it would have been considered inappropriate to learn about Korean expressions and conversations. *Imjinnok* would have also seemed improper for printing because it not only listed mostly historical facts with few conversations, but also included anti-Japanese sentiment. Thus, only *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* and *Choe Chung jeon* among the four works with Korean settings were selected for publication.

In addition, Jung Byung Sul (2005) argues that *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* and *Choe Chung jeon* were issued as books because both of them were representative works that demonstrated Korean international relations. *Choe Chung jeon* is known to be written at the end of the sixteenth century, which clarifies the international independence of contemporary Koreans. On the other hand, *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* is a work that demonstrates the toadyism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Thus, B. Jung (2005) argues that the publication of the two novels in Japan had the purpose of grasping Korean features reflected in them and is further evident in the intention to translate *Im Gyeong-eop jeon*. Before its publication, *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* was translated into Japanese and was listed serially in issues 8-12 of *Chosen shinpo* 朝鮮申報 (Joseon Daily News), a newspaper published for the Japanese residents in Busan (Lee and Kim 1991). The chief editor of this newspaper stated his motives for printing *Im Gyeong-*

ng-eop jeon:

I have recently read this novel and the hardship of the patriotic martyr leaves the readers heart-stricken while greatly helping them naturally understand the inner conditions of Joseon.¹⁹

While showing respect for the unwavering loyalty of Im Gyeong-eop, the editor thought that *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* was helpful to understand “the inner conditions of Joseon” of his day. This suggests that the Japanese wanted to grasp the situation or characteristics of Korea through *Im Gyeong-eop jeon*. In sum, beyond the goal of learning the Korean language, the publication of *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* and *Choe Chung jeon* had the additional purpose of appreciating Korean characteristics and culture.

Since the intention of translating *Chunhyangjeon* is more specific than the case of *Im Gyeong-eop jeon*, it is easier to appreciate exactly what the Japanese wished to learn through Korean classical novels. Although *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* has the significance of being the first Korean classical novel translated by a foreigner, its translation in its current form is only a partial translation of the whole work. *Keirin jowa shunkoden* 鷄林情話春香傳 (Korean Love Story *Chunhyangjeon*) is similarly significant, as it is recognized as the first complete translation by a foreigner. The work was translated in 1882 by Nakarai and was listed consecutively twenty times (June 25-July 23) in the newspaper *Osaka Asahi*. As is revealed by its title, this work is a translation of *Chunhyangjeon*, in the form of a script,²⁰ which was translated in order to understand the internal affairs of Korea. The intent of the translator is provided in the preface to the *Keirin jowa shunkoden*.

19. “余頃日、これを閲するに、誠に、烈士の艱難辛苦、看者をして、斷腸の思ひあらしぬがつや、自ら、朝鮮内地の事情を、知るに於て裨益するもの蓋し鮮少なら、” as cited in Yu (1989, 382).

20. Nakarai stayed in Korea from 1881 to 1888, when he seemed to have read many Korean classical novels. On returning to Japan, he wrote *Yume* 夢 (Dream) and *Ebisu suna fukukaze* 胡砂吹く風 (A Wind that Blows the Frontier), both of which were based on the Korean classical novel, *Gunnmong*. Particularly, the title of “*Gunnmong*” and its main characters are mentioned in *Ebisu suna fukukaze*. This novel was serially published 150 times in the newspaper *Tokyo Asahi*.

Although our country and Joseon have had a relationship for a long time, I always find it regretful that there is nothing that provides detailed information about Joseon's customs and culture. I have recently obtained a handbook dealing with a Joseon love story, which seems to shed some understanding on Korean customs and culture. I think this understanding is highly crucial to invigorating our trade and commerce with Joseon. Thus, I decided to translate and publish it serially in this newspaper.²¹

The translator wanted to provide the Japanese with information on Korean customs and way of thinking, from which one may gain the useful knowledge regarding trade and commerce between Japan and Korea. The translator made footnotes on Korean traditional culture and official system, which were hard for the Japanese to understand. For instance, he could not understand why Yi Mong-ryong deliberately wore shabby clothes and lied about his identity even to Chunhyang's mother when he came to town as an *amhaeng eosa* 暗行御使 (secret royal inspector). The translator thus asked a Korean about this and he was told two reasons: one is the *eosa's* custom, and the other is Mong-ryong's attempt to grasp the true intentions of Chunhyang and her mother by showing his changed figure.²² The translator provided these explanations in the footnotes. In addition, he explained an *amhaeng eosa* as a governor who distinguished between right and wrong in each provincial administration and supervised the officials' good and evil actions.²³ Regarding the event in which many disguised men suddenly appeared when the *amhaeng eosa* present-

21. “我國の朝鮮と關係あるや年已に久しといへども、未だ、彼國の土風人情を詳細に描寫して、世人の覽觀に供せしものあるを見ざりしは、常に頗る遺憾とせし所なるが、近日、偶彼の國の情話を記せし一小冊子を得たり。亦以て、其土風人情の一斑を知るに足るべくして、今日、彼國と通商貿易、方に盛んならんとするの時に當り、尤も必須なるものなれば、譯して追号の紙上に載す” (Nakarai [1882] 2004, 305).

22. “譯者曰く、李道聆が御史となり、假に姿を瘦しながら、春香の母に迄詐を構へて徒らに嘆を 増さしめたるハ、無情業に似たりとて、小生、或韓人に詰り問ひしに、其人の答て云り、此一ツにハ、御史たる者の法と、又一ツにハ、變れる状を示して、飽迄、母娘の眞意を探らん爲なりと。されバ、看客中、同じ思を起すの君もあらんかと、序に記し置くになん” (Nakarai [1882] 2004, 346-347).

23. “譯者曰く、御史ハ案察使の如きものにて、諸道政事の是非、官吏の善惡を視察するものなり” (Nakarai [1882] 2004, 342).

Table 2. List of Korean Classical Novels Translated by Foreigners
until the Early 1920s

Translator	Publication / Date	Listed Works
Horace Newton Allen	<i>Korean Tales</i> / 1899	<i>Chunhyangjeon</i> , <i>Sim Cheong jeon</i> , <i>Heungbujeon</i> , and <i>Hong Gil-dong jeon</i>
Takahashi Toru	<i>Chosen no monogatari-shu fu rigen</i> (A Collection of Joseon's Stories and Proverbs) / 1910	<i>Chunhyangjeon</i> , <i>Heungbujeon</i> , <i>Janghwa hongnyeon jeon</i> , and <i>Jaesaengyeon</i> ^a
James Scarth Gale ^b	<i>Korea Magazine</i>	<i>Choonyang</i> ^c
		<i>The Cloud Dream of the Nine</i> ^d
Hosoi Hajime	<i>Chosen bunka shiron</i> (A Historical Study of Joseon's Traditional Culture) / 1911	<i>Chunhyangjeon</i> , <i>Sim Cheong jeon</i> , <i>Gunmong</i> , <i>Jo Ung jeon</i> , <i>Hong Gil-dong jeon</i> , <i>Janghwa hongnyeon jeon</i> , and <i>Jaesaengyeon</i>
	<i>Tsuzoku chosen bunko</i> (A Collection of Popular Literature of Joseon) / 1921	<i>Gunmong</i> , <i>Sim Cheong jeon</i> , <i>Janghwa hongnyeon jeon</i> , <i>Hong Gil-dong jeon</i> , <i>Sassi namjeonggi</i> , <i>Gwanghallu gie</i> and <i>Chupung gambyeolgok</i>
	<i>Senman sosho</i> (A Collection of Joseon's Traditional Studies and Literature) / 1922-1923	<i>Unyeongjeon</i> , <i>Yeon-ui gak</i> , ^f <i>Sukhyangjeon</i> , and <i>Bonghwanggeum</i> ^g
	<i>Chosen bungaku kessakushu</i> (A Collection of Masterpieces in Joseon Literature) / 1924	<i>Chunhyangjeon</i> , <i>Sim Cheong jeon</i> , <i>Yeon-ui gak</i> , <i>Sassi namjeonggi</i> , <i>Janghwa hongnyeon jeon</i> , <i>Gunmong</i> , and <i>Unyeongjeon</i>

^a A different version of *Sugyeong nangja jeon*.

^b Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library at Toronto University, Canada, has preserved *James Scarth Gale Papers*, donated by Gale's son. Some scholars, such as Kwon Sun-Keung, browsed through the book and clarified that Gale translated 17 pieces of Korean classical novels into English, including *Chunhyangjeon* and *Gunmong* (S. K. Kwon et al. 2010).

^c A serial story from September 1917 to July 1918.

^d Published by Daniel O'Conner in London in 1922.

^e A different version of *Chunhyangjeon*.

^f A different version of *Heungbujeon*.

^g A different version of *Sounjeon*.

ed himself, the translator commented, “It seems strange that the *eosa* appeared there with many subordinates, but according to Joseon’s custom, an *eosa* took around his men in disguise.”²⁴ Given this, the translator made a careful, detailed translation in order to understand Korean culture accurately.

A translation of Korea classical novels continued after Nakarai’s translation. An example of the foreigners’ translations of Korean classical novels can be suggested as show in Table 2. In the table, Takahashi’s translations are shown as notable Japanese translations of Korean classical novels. Takahashi studied Korean language and culture in Korea, and published a collection of Korean narratives known as *Chosen no monogatari-shu fu rigen* 朝鮮の物語集附俚諺 (A Collection of Joseon’s Stories and Proverbs). The collection includes twenty-four traditional Korean narratives, Korean classical novels, and 547 proverbs. This book begins with the prologue by Takahashi:

Monogatari 物語 is an abbreviation of the essence in social life, made by the hands of people a very long time ago, in the Middle ages, or in the near past, and which has been handed down for a long time by word of mouth, stimulating the interest of society in a positive way.²⁵

Based on the above quotation, Takahashi certainly refers to *monogatari* as an oral narrative. However, the inclusion of the four classical novels in this collection of *monogatari* is peculiar. The reason for this inclusion is that Takahashi understood classical novels as one form of traditional Korean narratives. He did not have a definite genre concept regarding Korean classical novels. He regarded both narratives and novels as stories of Korean tradition and included them in the collection. In his introductory remarks, he stated his intention regarding the translation:

24. “譯者曰く、御史が俄かに夥多の従者を引連れ來ること、怪しむべきに似たれども、此國の風として、御史ハ、従者迄様様の形を變て召連ると云ふ” (Nakarai [1882] 2004, 357).

25. “物語は社會生活の精髓的縮圖にして、或は極めて上代に、或は下りて中世に若くは近き過去の人 手に成り、善く社會の興味を刺戟して口口相承けて長く傳はり來れるものなり” (Takahashi 1910, 3).

A social observer must recognize the features of manners and customs that are immovable within genuine life. Yet it is not sufficient to study such manners and customs. Social research can be said to be completed, insofar as it has examined and clarified the spirit that is consistent in the manners and customs, and grasped the ideology controlling the society. If we fully discover this social spirit and ideal, and thus provide a large picture of it, this will make a great contribution to the management of politicians and social strategists. That is, we should deduce the source of the public mind and suggest a new direction for educating the human mind. While staying as a guest in this country for a few years, I have completed this book with the purpose of collecting Joseon's stories and proverbs.²⁶

The above quotation suggests that Takahashi recognized his identity as a “social observer.” Through Korean *monogatari*, he attempted to grasp a spirit inherent in Korean manners and customs and deduce the source that stimulates the Korean psyche, revealing that his ultimate intention was to contribute to politicians’ or social observers’ colonial management of Joseon. That is, Takahashi tried to understand the nature of Koreans by studying and analyzing Korean classical novels, and he intended to use his studies for political purposes. However, the fact that only four classical novels were translated by Takahashi shows that his chief concern was to learn culture as an advanced stage of study. This effort to understand Korean culture through Korean classical novels can be further confirmed by the collection of classical novels led by the Japanese Government-General of Joseon. The *Joseon doseo haeje* (Annotations of Joseon Books) published by the Japanese Government-General of Joseon in 1919 included the following Korean classic novels: *Hwasa* (The History of Flowers), *Sassi namjeonggi* (Record of Lady Sa’s Trip to the South), *Guummong*, *Changseon*

26. “社會觀察者はありの儘の生活の中に動かぬ風俗習慣の特色あるを認識せざるべからず。風俗習慣を究むるは猶不充分なり。更に其の風俗習慣を一貫する所の精神を看取り、而して其の社會を統制する所の理想に歸納して、始めて社會研究の能事畢れりとなすべし。是の社會精神と理想とを完全に發見し得たらんには、これ網の大綱を提げたるにて、爲政者社會政策者の經營施設にも多大の貢獻を與ふ。直ちに民衆の心泉を斟みて此に陶冶の工夫を着くるを得せしむればなり。予客歲以來如上の目的を以て朝鮮の物語と俚諺とを蒐集し、積むて本書を成せり” (Takahashi 1910, 3-4).

gamuirok (That Goodness Be Manifest and Righteousness Prized), *Unyeongjeon* (The Tale of Unyeong), *Chunhyangjeon*, and *Wang Rang banhon jeon* (The Tale of Wang Rang), among others.

After Takahashi, Korean classical novels increasingly became the target of research to achieve a more comprehensive ethnic understanding. This point is affirmed by the fact that Korean classical novels were investigated and organized as part of a publication project of old Korean books, while the number of translation works increased explosively. Moreover, Japanese scholars recognized Korean classical novels not as a *story* but as a *literary work* after Takahashi.²⁷ This kind of recognition was certainly formed by an intention to gain knowledge about Korean ethnicity and ways of thinking.

Hosoi Hajime was one of the representative scholars who utilized Korean classical novels to understand Korean ethnicity and culture after Takahashi. Hosoi entered Korea in 1908 and established the Chosen Kenkyukai 朝鮮研究會 (Joseon Research Association) in 1911, publishing the *Chosen bunka shiron* (A Historical Study of Joseon's Traditional Culture) as its first project. Table 2 shows that seven Korean classical novels are included in this book. Several individuals, such as Inada Shunsui 稲田春水, participated in the effort that aimed at translating not the entire text but its summary. In 1920, Hosoi founded the publishing company Jiyu Tokyusha 自由討究社 in Japan, and spurred the translation and publication of Korean materials. The outcome of the efforts was the *Tsuzoku chosen bunko* (A Collection of Popular Literature of Joseon) in 1921 and the *Senman sosho* (A Collection of Joseon's Traditional Studies and Literature) in 1922-1923. As indicated in Table 2, seven works like *Guanmong* are included in *Tsuzoku chosen bunko* and four works like *Unyeongjeon* are included in *Senman sosho*. Hosoi did not translate all of these works by

27. This kind of recognition was already present in Gale's thought. He translated *Chunhyangjeon* into English, taking the printed text written by a known author, *Okjunghwa* (Prison Flower), a different version of *Chunhyangjeon*, as its original text. For him, *Chunhyangjeon* is a literary work represented by *Okjunghwa*, which is a linguistic art that describes the life style of Korean people, the author's thought, and the readers' mind. For more details, see S. Lee (2010).

himself; while some were translated or proofread by Hosoi, others came from Japanese transcriptions of a Korean person reading, translations by other Japanese, and anonymous translations. Hosoi edited and published *Chosen bungaku kessakushu* (A Collection of Masterpieces in Joseon Literature) in 1924, in which nine works considered the primary representatives of Korean classical novels, based on previous selections and publications by the Jiyu Tokyusha, were included. Furthermore, this collection was composed of entirely Korean classical novels, except for *Namhun taepyeongga* (Namhun Songs of Peace). This indicates that Hosoi considered Korean classical novels as a representative component of Korean literature. The motivation behind his passionate participation in translating and publishing Korean classical novels was explained in the introduction notes of the *Chosen bungaku kessakushu*:

The genuine union of Japan with Joseon must include the Japanese understanding of Joseon people. It is necessary to know their strengths and weaknesses and to show respect for the former and have sympathy for the latter at the same time. If we look down on and hate them without knowing their strengths, and if we pursue fellowship and union only with words, what will become of this? The fastest way to understand the mind of a nation is to know its literature. Literature is a crystallized form, made by distilling the culmination of human mind, and it serves to help us understand the spirit of the age and also tells us where the character of the people is derived from.²⁸

The above quotation suggests that Hosoi was ultimately aiming for the authentic unity between Joseon and Japan. For this union, he argued that the Japanese should understand the people of Joseon, and that nothing was more effective than literature to realize this understanding since it

28. “内鮮の眞の結合は、何よりも先づ内地人が朝鮮人を理解するにある。特長も欠点も知り抜いて、その特長に敬意を表すると共に、欠点に同情するにある。對者の特長も知らず、ただその欠点のみを蔑み憎んで居て、口頭に親善融和を追求して何が出來やうぞ。大凡國家民族の心性を理解せんが爲めには、其の國家民族の文學を知るより徑捷なるはない。文學は、人情の極致を蒸溜して、水晶玉の如く結晶したるもの、單に當時の時代精神を知るの便宜あるのみならず、時の古今を縦斷して、その國民性格の由來を察することができる” (Hosoi 1924, 4-5).

was a “crystallized form made by distilling the culmination of human mind” as well as the most effective shortcut to understand the origin of a national character, the spirit of an age, and the mind of a nation. In short, Hosoi’s active involvement in translating and publishing Korean classical novels had the fundamental purpose of understanding Korea, as was the case for both Nakarai and Takahashi. However, Hosoi also openly expressed his political purpose of strengthening the *naisen ittai* 内鮮一體 (Japan and Korea as One Body) through the translation of Korean classical novels.

So far, the Korean classical novels published and translated by the Japanese before the 1920s have been systematically reviewed. As mentioned previously in the introduction, this study does not discuss the studies produced after Takahashi because the purpose is to grasp the process leading to the start of such study.²⁹ Takahashi, a leader of the study of Korean classical novels, understood Korean classical novels by translating and studying a few works. He classified these novels into four groups: (1) novels embellishing the ancient history of Joseon and hero stories, (2) novels describing the ideal life for the people of Joseon, (3) novels about good triumphs over evil, and (4) novels expressing the doctrines of Zhu Xi, among others (Lee and Ryu 2012, 369). Through this, he came to conclude that Korean culture was subordinate to Chinese culture and used this belief as the justification for colonial rule. The Japanese, who initially studied in order to understand the nature of Koreans, eventually utilized their studies for political purposes.

29. The Japanese acceptance of Korean classical novels did not just flow in one direction, that is, from the learning process to the study. After the study started, the Japanese still endeavored to expand their understanding about Korean classical novels by researching and listing them. These efforts can be ascertained in the study by Tanaka Umekichi 田中梅吉. As an assistant professor of law school at the Keijo Imperial University, Tanaka researched and listed Korean classical novels distributed right after the Japanese annexation of Korea. About 20 classic novels were included in his list. See Yoo (2011).

Conclusion

This study has examined how the Japanese accepted Korean classical novels from the late Joseon dynasty up until the 1920s. During this early stage, the Japanese who encountered Korean classical novels used them to learn Korean language or understand Korean culture. Later, they began to transcribe these novels and then translated and published them as learning materials for Korean language and culture. This study, thus, considered the ways in which the Korean language was learned through the transcription of classic novels and Korean culture was learned through publication and translation.

The person who first transcribed Korean classical novels to learn Korean was Amenomori. He did this beginning in 1703 in order to fulfill his duty as an interpreter and he also used Korean classical novels such as *Sukhyangjeon* and *Yi Baek-gyeong jeon* to teach others. Japanese scholars continued to use Korean classical novels as a way to learn Korean in the 1880s and the number of works used increased to fifteen. As the interest in Korean classical novels increased, the Japanese began to translate and publish them. *Choe Chung jeon* and *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* were published in Japan, and *Im Gyeong-eop jeon* and *Chunhyangjeon* were translated into Japanese in the 1880s. The translations of Korean classical novels by scholars such as Nakarai, Takahashi, and Hosoi continued to grow in volumes. Hosoi, in particular, emphasized the necessity to learn Korean classical novels because he thought that novels were a shortcut to understanding Joseon. In short, Hosoi thought that the essence of Korean culture was to be found in classical Korean novels, and therefore Korean culture could not be understood properly without learning from its novels. As a consequence, Korean classical novels became valuable materials for the Japanese to understand Korean culture. The Japanese carried out their studies in earnest after introducing Korean classical novels through their transcriptions, translations, and publications.

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