



list

Books from Korea

Vol.6 Winter 2009

A Quarterly Magazine for Publishers

Special Section

Korean Cinema and Literature

Interviews

Novelist **Jo Kyung-ran**

Cartoonist **Kim Donghwa**

Editor **Drenka Willen**

The Place

Hongdae

Book Cafes, Publishing Houses
and Coffee Streets

Theme Lounge

Books on Healing

KLTI Grants for Prospective Publishers

KLTI Overseas Marketing Grants

Areas of Funding

Publication marketing events and advertisements

Applicant Qualifications

Publishers who have published Korean books in translation and are planning to hold promotional events

Grant Amount

- Roundtrip airfare and accommodation expenses for the author, expenses for events and advertisements, etc.
- The amount will be determined by KLTI after due consideration of the marketing plan and scale.
- * The grant will be provided directly to the author or to the overseas publisher in two payments, before and after an event.

How to Apply

Register as a member on the website (www.koreanbooks.or.kr) and complete the online application form.

Application Documents

All documents should be scanned and uploaded on the application page of the website.

1. Introduction of the publisher, along with its history and past publications, including any previous books related to Korea
2. A copy of the contract between the publisher and the translators
3. A copy of the contract between the publisher and the copyright holders
4. The translator's resume

Other Information to Include

1. Detailed event plan including a breakdown of anticipated expenses
2. Publication cost
3. Total cost of event (marketing or promotion)
4. Requested grant amount

Application Schedule

Submission period: any time throughout the year
Grant notification: April, July, October, and January

Contact

Name: Kim Ji-eun
Email: grants@klti.or.kr

KLTI Overseas Publication Grants

Applicant Qualifications

Any publisher who has signed a contract for the publishing rights of a Korean book

Grant Amount

- Part of the total publication expenses
- The amount varies depending on the publication cost and the genre of the book.
- The grant will be awarded after publication.

How to Apply

Register as a member on the website (www.koreanbooks.or.kr) and complete the online application form.

Application Documents

All documents should be scanned and uploaded on the application page of the website.

1. Introduction of the publisher, along with its history and past publications, including any previous books related to Korea
2. Publication plan including the dates and budget for translation and publication in detail
3. A copy of the contract between the publisher and the translator
4. A copy of the contract between the publisher and the copyright holders
5. The translator's resume

Application Schedule

Submission period: any time throughout the year
Grant notification: April, July, October, and January

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Name: Kim Ji-eun
Email: grants@klti.or.kr

Korean Books and Movies: A Creative Synergy

As is widely known, on December 28, 1895, the Lumière Brothers held the first-ever screening of projected motion pictures at the Salon Indien du Grand Café in Paris, France. In Korea, although opinions on the exact date differ, existing documents tell us that motion pictures began screening before 1903. During this period, films were screened by foreign diplomats at hotels or parties, or at promotional events held by cigarette companies from the West. And just like in any other country, Koreans witnessing motion pictures for the first time were dazzled, and in some instances that seem absurd now, there were viewers that, surprised by the train projected on the screen, bolted out of the room.

Due to conditions stemming from colonization and underdevelopment, early Korean films faced many difficulties. The films being produced in the 1910s and the 20s were mostly documents of Korean folk customs and ways of life; also, during this period, “kinodramas”—a modified form of theater that mixed scenes from movies into plays—were often screened. After 1920, traditional Korean novels such as *The Story of Chunhyang*, *The Story of SimCheong*, and *Heartlessness*, Lee Kwang-soo’s popular contemporary novel, were adapted for the big screen. An especially noteworthy film from this period is Na Yun-kyoo’s *Arirang* (1926). Even though the print no longer exists, *Arirang*, which was based on an original screenplay, is remembered as a major artistic accomplishment and a cinematic expression of national identity. Even after the 1930s, many literary figures continued their relationship with cinema, and film adaptations of important literary works remained popular among viewers.

Historically, literature and film continuously maintained a conversation in Korea. Filmmakers sought strong storylines from novels and wished to reach the level of artistic excellence associated with literature. On the other hand, films inspired novelists to reach a new level of visual excellence, and various cinematic methods helped expand the literary language. In Korea, literature and cinema experienced, documented, and conversed with the rapidly changing tide of Korean modern history; together, they cultivated and enriched the Korean cultural landscape. This edition of *list* features a special section on Korean literature and cinema. We hope this rather brief examination of the path taken by Korean literature and cinema can provide the reader with an opportunity to feel and understand the diversity and potential of Korean culture.

By Kim Dongshik
(editorial board member)

Mexico Meets Korean Literature

The Korea Literature Translation Institute is participating in the Guadalajara International Book Fair, one of the major book fairs in the Spanish-speaking world. KLTI will introduce Korean literature that has been translated into Spanish as well as other Korean books translated into English, French, German, and Chinese.

During the fair, various literary events will be held:

November 26 11:00

Lecture on Korean literature at UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico), Mexico City

November 29 20:00

Lecture by author Ha Seong-nan on Korean literature written by women, in Room D of the Exhibition Hall, Invited by the organizing committee of the book fair, Guadalajara.

November 30 10:00

Lecture on Korean literature at Auditorio Adalberto Navarro Sanchez UDG (Universidad de Guadalajara), Guadalajara

November 30 19:00

Meet guest authors Kim Joo-Young, and Lee Seung-u in Room 4 of the Exhibition Hall, Guadalajara .

Guadalajara International Book Fair

KLTI Books Exhibition Period: Saturday, November 28, 2009-Wednesday, December 2, 2009

Location: Guadalajara Book Fair Booth # II 28

Guest authors: Kim Joo-Young, Lee Seung-u, and Ha Seong-nan

Contact: sypark@klti.or.kr



Kim Joo-Young

A Thornback is being released this November in Spanish by Ediciones del Ermitaño. His major work, a history novel called *The Innkeeper*, won acclaim for offering a new point of view and understanding of history. His books have been published in English, Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Russian, and Bulgarian.



Lee Seung-u

The Private Life of Plants is being released this November in Spanish by Ediciones del Ermitaño. He deals with serious subjects such as human existentialism, original sin, and the resulting anxiety and redemption. His books have been published in English, German, Japanese, and Spanish.



Ha Seong-nan

Her short story, "The Woman Next Door" is included in the collection *Ji-do* by Argentinean publisher and editor Santiago Arcos. Her writing reflects deep self-reflection and warm-hearted observations on human relations. Her meticulous writing style is gaining the attention of readers. Her works have been published in Chinese, English, Japanese, German, and Spanish.



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Cao Qing, an editor from the Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, was in charge of editing of Ha Seong-nan's *Sapporo Inn*.



Cha Seunghun is a photographer who has worked for various Korean magazines and commercial photo shoots. He completed the International Center of Photography General Studies program and is active on his own projects as a fine art photographer.



Cho Hanwoong is a freelance copywriter and author. His major works include *The Romantic Job*, based on his experience of opening a café, and *A Bachelor's Story*, an essay based on his own bachelorhood.



Chung Chonghwa is a professor in the Film Department at Kyunghee University and also a researcher at the Korean Film Institute. He is working on a thesis regarding the formation of Korean movie styles under Japanese rule. His books include *History of Korean Cinema* (2007).

Han Mihwa writes on the subject of publishing. Her written works include *Bestsellers of Our Time* and *This Is How Bestsellers Are Made* 1, 2. She is also an editorial board member of *list_Books from Korea*.



Geneviève Roux-Faucard holds an Agrégation in German and has taught German language and literature for numerous years. She has a doctorate in translation studies. She currently teaches as Maître de Conférences at ESIT (Paris 3) in the translation department and in particular for the "régime spécial." She is the author of *Poétique du récit traduit* (2009, Lettres Modernes Minard), a book about the translation of literary narratives.

Jang Dongseok is a literary critic. He is a former editor-in-chief of *Publishing Journal* magazine.

Jeoung Byung-kyu is currently director of the specialist children's book store Heyri Donghwanara, and is also senior researcher at the Art Center for Children's Books at Paju Book City. His most noted work is *The History of Children's Books as Seen Through Visual Images*.

Jung Yeo-ul is a literary critic. Jung lectures at Seoul National University and the Korean National University of Arts.

Kang Yu-jung is a literary critic. In 2007, she published *Oedipus' Forest*. Currently, she teaches at Korea University and is a member of the literature editorial committee for the quarterly publication *Segyeui Munhak*.

Kim Dongshik is a literary critic and a professor of Korean language and literature at Inha University. He is a contributing editor for the journal, *Literature and Society*. He is also an editorial board member of *list_Books from Korea*.

Kim Ji-eun is a writer of children's stories and a critic of children's literature. She currently lectures on theories of writing fiction for children in the Department of Creative Writing at Hanshin University. She is also an editorial board member of *list_Books from Korea*.

Kim Jinwoo serves as a reporter at the culture desk of *The Kyunghyang Shinmun*, having previously worked on sports, society, politics, and economy section teams.

Kim Meekyung worked as a journalist at *The Hankyoreh* newspaper from 1988 to 2004. Since 2005, she has been living in New York as a librarian at the Korean Cultural Services New York.

Ko Mihye joined the *Yonhap News* agency in 2004 and worked in the Gangwon report department and securities department before transferring to the culture department in March of 2008 to specialize in literature.

Lee Ji-young is a reporter at the culture desk of the *JoongAng Ilbo*. She joined the *JoongAng Ilbo* in 1994, and after working on the life science team, the nationwide network, and the social policy section, she became a reporter for the culture desk in 2004, taking charge of the children's books section.



Lee Sang-young is a movie critic currently working as a programmer for the Pusan International Film Festival. His major works include *All That Cinema Allows*. His next project is a book dealing with both movies and literature.

Lee Yeong-gyeong started working for *The Kyunghyang Shinmun* in 2005. She worked in the judicial team at the society department of the newspaper for three years. She transferred to the culture department in October 2008 and currently specializes in literature.



Oh Cheol-woo is a journalist in charge of the science section of *The Hankyoreh* newspaper. He is currently in the middle of his doctorate courses at Seoul National University's Natural Science Graduate School where he is focusing on science history and science philosophy.

Oh Yunhyun writes children's books. Currently, he is editor-in-chief of the culture and science section of a weekly magazine, *SisaIN*, and is a member of the World of Children's Story Society. His books include *Tori Is Escaping From Game Land*, and *The Amazing Mystery of Our Body*.

Park Suk-kyoung works as a translator and children's literature critic. Park is a member of the editorial committee for the *Changbi Review of Children's Literature*.

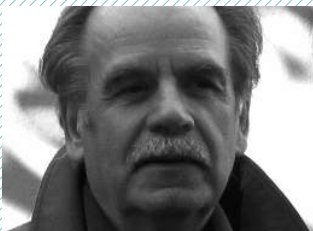
Pyo Jeonghun is a book reviewer, columnist, translator, and freelance writer. He has translated 10 books into Korean and wrote: *Books Have Their Own Destiny*, *A Short Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, and *An Interview with My Teacher: What Is Philosophy?*

Richard Hong is a book columnist and the head of BC Agency. He translated *13: The Story of the World's Most Notorious Superstitions*, appeared on KBS 1 Radio's "Global Today," and writes columns for *The Korea Economic Daily* and *Posco News*. He is also an editorial board member of *list_Books from Korea*.

Seo Chan-hwe is a *manhwa* critic who is currently teaching in the Cartoon & Comics Creation Department at Chungkang College of Cultural Industry. He is a co-author of *Animation Secret File*, *Lee Doo-Ho Who Draws Chosun*, and *2008 Korea Manhwa Yearbook*.

Shin Junebong is a journalist in the literature department of the *JoongAng Ilbo*. He received his master's degree from Goldsmiths, University of London in 2008, and is interested in theoretical analyses of literature, cultural phenomena, and customs. He is also an editorial board member of *list_Books from Korea*.

Sutep Prommongkol graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Thai with 2nd honors from Rajabhat Mahasarakham University. He is now completing his Master's degree in Thai Studies at Ramkhamhaeng University. He first joined Nanmeebooks as a proofreader for five years and is now in the editorial department as a non-fiction editor.



Styrbjörn Gustafsson has worked as a teacher of languages and humanities, as a consultant to the Swedish Board of Education and the Swedish Council for International Development, and was posted in Bangladesh for four years. For 13 years he has been running Tranan Publishing House, today with a list of some 160 titles, mostly translated fiction from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In May this year he received the Karin Gierow Prize from the Swedish Nobel Academy for his publishing achievements.

Whon Jaeheoun is a poet. Currently, he is deejaying a radio show called "Happy Literature" on Gugak FM. His major books include an anthology titled *Strawberry*, the novel *Sea and Coffee*, and an essay collection *I Was Happy Only When I Wrote or Read Books*.

Yi Soo-hyung is a literary critic and a senior researcher at the Seoul National University Academic Writing Lab. He studied contemporary literature, and has taught at Hongik University, Seoul Institute of the Arts, and Korea National University of Arts.

Translators

Janet Hong is a writer and translator living in Toronto, Canada. She won the grand prize for her translation of Ha Seong-nan's "The Woman Next Door" in the 32nd Korea Times Modern Literature Translation Contest, and was the recipient of a grant from the Korea Literature Translation Institute. She is currently completing the final year of her MFA in creative writing.

Jung Yewon studied interpretation and translation at GSIT, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. Jung has interpreted and translated for Bain & Company, Korea and various other organizations, and is currently working as a freelance interpreter/translator.

Kim Chi-young is the recipient of The Daesan Foundation Translation Grant in 2005 and 2008, and the 34th Modern Korean Literature Translation Award in 2003. Her translations include Jo Kyung-ran's *Tongue* (Bloomsbury USA, 2009), Kim Young-ha's *I Have the Right to Destroy Myself* (Harvest Books, 2007), and Lee Dong-ha's *Toy City* (Koryo Press, 2007). She is currently working on two novels to be published in 2010: Shin Kyung-Sook's *Please Look After Mom* (Knopf) and Kim Young-ha's *Empire of Light* (Harvest Books).



Kim Cheewan is a Korean who writes for Americans and an adult who writes for children. He received an MFA in Writing for Children from The New School in 2008.

Kim Eungsan graduated from Seoul National University in German Literature and also studied at the Free University of Berlin. He earned a Master's degree in Comparative Literature.

Sora Kim-Russell works as a consulting editor for *The Korea Journal* and as a freelance translator. She was the recipient of the 2005 Korea Times Literature Translation Contest's Grand Prize in Poetry and the 2007 Korea Literature Translation Institute's New Translator Award for her translation of Kim Junghyuk's "Eskimo, This Is the End."

Son Sumin has translated many books from English to Korean and from Korean to English for Schweitzer Korea. In 2004, she was awarded the Commendation Prize in the Korea Times Literature Translation Contest for her co-translation of Go Eunju's "Cocktail Sugar."

Suzanne Burrows majored in theater at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. She is a freelance editor who currently resides in Seoul.

list

Books from Korea

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New York



São Paulo



Stockholm



Moscow

Korean Literature Events in Sweden, Brazil, Russia, and the U.S.

Literary events introducing Korean literature to foreign readers were held in Sweden, Brazil, Russia, and the U.S. in September and October 2009. The first event was at the Stockholm East Asian Museum (Östasiatiska Museet) on the 19th of September, with authors Yun Heung-gil, Chun Yanghee, and Yi Mun-yol present as part of a ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of Korean-Swedish relations. Gabriel Jonsson, Instructor of Korean Studies at Stockholm University, gave a short introduction of the Korean writers and their works, after which each of the three writers read from their works and answered questions from readers.

In São Paulo, Brazil, a series of Korean literature programs and a Korean Literature Night were held from the 7th to the 11th of October at venues including the University of São Paulo (USP) and the Rose House, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Korean-Brazilian relations. The event was

organized to coincide with the publication of *Selected Contemporary Korean Short Stories* in Brazil with novelist Lee Hochul, poet Shin Dalja, and critic Kwon O-ryong present. It marked Korea's first attempt at literary communication with Brazilian critics, introducing the works of Korean writers and having the writers read from their works.

The Korean-Russian Writer's Meeting was held on October 23rd at the Korean Embassy of Russia. This year marked its third anniversary, with eight writers including Korean novelists Shin Kyung-sook, Eun Hee-kyung, poets Lee Taesoo, Moon Taejun, and Russian novelists Anashkevich Marina Aleksandrovna, Mamleev Yuri Vitalievich, poets Boris Abramovich Skotnevsky and Korobov Vladimir Borisovich, and literary critics Yoo Sungho and Lev Anninsky present. Lectures were also held at the National University of Moscow and the Russian National College of Humanities. Writers Shin Kyung-sook and Lee Taesoo lectured at the former, and Moon Taejun and Professor Yoo Sungho at the latter.

On October 31st at the Korean Cultural Services New York in the Korea Gallery, writers including novelists Hwang Sok-yong and Jo Kyung-ran, and poets Mah Chonggi and Kim Hyesoon participated in a roundtable titled "A Discussion with Four Contemporary Korean Writers" that opened the cultural event. This event sponsored by the Cultural Services New York featured readings by Hwang Sok-yong from *The Old Garden*, published in the U.S. by Seven Stories Press, and by Jo Kyung-ran from *Tongue*, published by Bloomsbury USA. The Korean-American poet Mah Chonggi, widely known in South Korea, read six poems, and Kim Hyesoon, whose collection *Mommy Must Be a Fountain of Feathers* was published in the U.S. by Action Books, read seven poems.

Non-Western Writers Speak Up

The AALA Literature Symposium was hosted by the Asian, African, & Latin American Literary Forum and the Korea Literature Translation Institute on the 29th and 30th of October 2009, at the Incheon Art Platform. Born out of the spirit to change the scope of world literature through re-examining it from traditionally marginalized viewpoints, the theme of the event was "Beyond Borders." The panel was composed of celebrated writers such as Korean novelist Park Wansuh, Palestinian author Sahar Khalifa, Luisa Valenzuela of Argentina, Sindiwe Magona from South Africa, and Asenjo Genevieve Lampasa of the Philippines. On the 29th,

Park, Khalifah, Valenzuela, and Magona discussed "The Voice of Non-Western Female Writers," and on the 30th, Korean writers such as novelists Cheon Woonyoung and Son Honggyu, poet Shin Yong-mok, and critic Lee Kyeong-jae participated in an open discussion with foreign writers on "Literature and Globalization."

Winners of the 9th Korean Literature Translation Award



The award ceremony for the 9th Korean Literature Translation Award will be held on the 10th of December, 2009, at the Korea Press Center International Conference Hall. The Best Translation Prize goes to Vincenza D'Urso's translation into Italian of Hwang Sok-yong's *The Shadow of Arms*, while the Translation Prize goes to Ahn Woo-sik's Japanese translation of *Selected Contemporary Korean Short Stories* and a French translation of Jung Young-moon's *Black Chain of Stories* by Choi Ae-young and Jean Bellemin-Noel.

The Korean Literature Translation Award, now in its ninth year, was first started in 1993 to attract foreign publishers and improve the quality of literary translation in Korea.

The works of translators who had at least two volumes of Korean literature translations published overseas by a local publisher between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2008 were judged by a panel of Korean and foreign judges, composed of separate committees for 15 languages, who selected a number of nominees based on comprehension of the original text, faithfulness, and quality of the finished translation, readability, literary style, and local reception, finally selecting one Best Translation Prize and two Translation Prize winners.

The Korean Literature Translation Award for New Translators held annually to uncover new talent to introduce Korean literature abroad has also announced its winners for this year. There are 13 awardees translating in seven languages. The winners are listed on the KLTI website at www.klti.or.kr.

By Choi Hye-in

KLTI NY Forum

Beyond Borders: Translating and Publishing Korean Literature in the U.S.



Kim Joo-young



Charles Armstrong



Theodore Hughes



Heinz Insu Fenkl



Jo Kyung-ran



Jenny Wang Medina



Jenna Johnson



Jennifer Crewe



Jill Schoolman



Jin Auh

In order to raise interest and awareness about Korean literature overseas, the Korea Literature Translation Institute launched KLTI Forum in three major international cities this year. It began with the KLTI Tokyo forum in Japan last July, featuring “Communicating Through Korean Literature in Japan” and the next KLTI Beijing forum in China last September on “Publishing Korean Literature in China.” And on October 30th, its third forum on “Beyond Borders: Translating and Publishing Korean Literature in the U.S.” was held in New York. The KLTI NY Forum was co-sponsored by the Center for Korean Research, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures and Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University. Scholars, translators, publishers, and agencies who have shaped Korean literature in the U.S. gathered on this occasion to discuss how Korean literature can achieve global readership. The forum was divided into two sessions: the first session named “Korean Literature in a Transnational World: Writing and Translating for a Global Readership” shared translation-related experiences of a scholar, writer, and a translator; while the second session began with a presentation on publishing Korean literature within the U.S. commercial market, and continued with a publishing roundtable among four publishers. KLTI plans to extend its forums to five major cities next year, newly tapping into Paris and Berlin.

KLTI NY Forum Panel

Kim Joo-young

(president, Korea Literature Translation Institute; literary critic)

Charles Armstrong

(associate professor of Modern Korean History and Director, Center for Korean Research, Columbia University)

Theodore Hughes

(assistant professor of Modern Korean Literature, Columbia University)

Heinz Insu Fenkl

(associate professor, Dept. of English, SUNY New Paltz; translator and author)

Jo Kyung-ran

(author; in July, her novel, *Tongue* was translated and published by Bloomsbury USA)

Jenny Wang Medina

(translator, Ph. D. Candidate, Modern Korean Literature, Columbia University)

Jenna Johnson

(senior editor, Harcourt/Houghton Mifflin)

Jennifer Crewe

(editorial director, Columbia University Press)

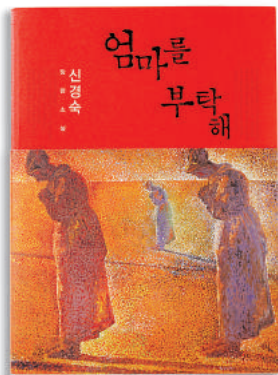
Jill Schoolman

(publisher, Archipelago Books)

Jin Auh

(literary agent, Andrew Wylie Agency)

Please Look After Mom Hits Record High



Some of the world's major publishers are Knopf, a division of Random House in the U.S., Weidenfeld & Nicolson of England, Piper Verlag of Germany, and Shueisha of Japan. These companies have all signed contracts to translate and publish one of Shin Kyung-sook's bestselling novels, *Please Look After Mom*. Though the actual number of contracts has not been revealed, it is known that the author is getting five-figure advance payments from publishers in America, England, Germany, France, and Spain. As of now, copyright contracts have

been signed with 14 publishers. (source: Imprima Korea Agency, 13th Nov. 2009) This book is breaking Korean literature records with the number of countries that have bought the copyrights and the amount of the book advance.

This book broke another record by selling a million copies in the shortest period of time since its release in November 2008. It has been like a mother's comfort to Koreans who have been suffering under the worldwide economic crisis; once translated into different languages, it will embrace readers worldwide who have forgotten the

importance of family in the midst of their hectic lives and remind them of their warm-hearted mothers.

What feedback will the book bring to the global book market? The answer will directly affect Korean literature's future position in the world. Consequently, many people have high expectations for the success of *Please Look After Mom*.

By Richard Hong

Spotlight on Korean Comics at Frankfurt Book Fair



This year, Korean *manhwa* (cartoons) celebrates its 100th anniversary. Lee Do-young's cartoon first appeared in the *Daehan Minbo* on June 2, 1909. Korean *manhwa* are becoming better known in the world market. At the 2009 Bologna Children's Book Fair and the 2009 Frankfurt International Book Fair, publishers from around the world showed great interest in Korean *manhwa*.

According to the Korea Creative Content Agency, which managed the special exhibition of Korean *manhwa* in Frankfurt, the future sales from international copyrights after the book fair is estimated to be nearly 1.75 million dollars. Along with the existing *manhwa* publishers and agencies, Kenaz, a new *manhwa* artist developing company which started as an online *manhwa* community, presented about 60 new *manhwa* books by new artists at this exhibition, which drew the attention of many overseas publishers and received favorable appraisal.

Kenaz has published a *manhwa*

called *Ghost Face* by Hyung Min-woo and also launched a mobile game based on it. Among the new 60 titles, O Sehyung's *The Whole Land of Korea*, which was created for the purpose of export, has already received interest from NBM of the U.S., Kana of Belgium, Tokyopop GmbH of Germany, Gramedia of Indonesia, and Kami of France. It will be published in Korea as a single volume edition in December and its copyright sold to seven countries. *The Whole Land of Korea* retells actual events that happened in Korea in 2007 in Boryoung-si (city), Chungcheongnam-do (province) in which a family was murdered and a middle school girl was kidnapped. Its lyrical illustrations and moving story are expected to touch readers worldwide. Other titles are also currently in contract discussions with overseas publishers. Kenaz's *manhwa* will be introduced on a French online *manhwa* site starting next March.

By Richard Hong

Writer's Note



Korean-Chinese writers conference



KLTI Beijing forum

The “Culture of Relationships” Between Korea and China



Without fail, books on China published in Korea mention the importance of relationships in China. Such books state that China is governed not by laws and rational procedures, but by relationships, and advise that before doing anything in China, you should first establish good relationships with people. The advice isn't entirely wrong. However, is there any place in the world where relationships aren't important? So often, things that could have worked out don't work out because of relationship problems, and vice versa, regardless of where you are. Thus, the advice is seriously flawed, for it could sound as though you should establish relationships with people any way you can, no matter what it takes.

It is certainly true that China places great importance on relationships. However, that does not mean that China places importance on all kinds of relationships. What matters is a trustworthy relationship, and a trustworthy friendship. The “three bonds and the five moral rules in human relations” state that “faith should reign over the relation between friends.” A trustworthy friendship is so important in China that the people of China take care to treat with respect even a friend of a friend. People often say that the Chinese don't trust people easily, but that once they come to trust someone, they do not easily let go of the person. Such a culture arises from the context of “a trustworthy friend.”

Unlike Korea, China is a nation of vast lands, diverse people, and heterogeneous customs. Consequently, it is natural, for instance, for someone from Beijing to go to Shanghai, or for someone from Harbin to go to Urumqi, and seek help and advice from friends and acquaintances. There's nothing wrong or unusual with that, just as there's nothing wrong with Koreans going abroad and seeking help from other Koreans. Even in Korea, where everyone lives in the same time zone, shares the same culture, and uses the same language, people are glad to run into someone from their hometown; it's no wonder that people are glad to meet someone from home in China, where things are strange and familiar whenever you go to a new town. It's no wonder, too, that people from the same town want to help each other. In that respect, the “relationship of cultures” in China is a valuable custom and tradition created by their natural and cultural environments.

For that reason, I feel optimistic that the Korean-Chinese writers conferences sponsored by the Paradise Cultural Foundation and the KLTI forums overseen by the Korea Literature Translation Institute to be held in the future will be even more successful than the three previous ones. In those three years, the writers of Korea and those of China have built a trustworthy friendship. Without this, why would Shu-Ting have wiped away his tears, sad to say goodbye, and why would Zhang Wei have invited Korean writers to his lecture hall? And why else would Dong Cheng Long have volunteered to arrange the next conference in Xi'an? I believe that these actions by Chinese writers demonstrate the essential beauty of China's culture of relationships, and feel hopeful about the future of the Korea-China writers' conference and the KLTI forum.

By Hong Jungsun

Hong Jungsun is a professor of the Department of Korean Language and Literature at Inha University. He is co-head of Moonji Publishing Co., Ltd. His major books include *Historical Life and Criticism*, *Prometheus' Years*, and *Literature as Humanities*.

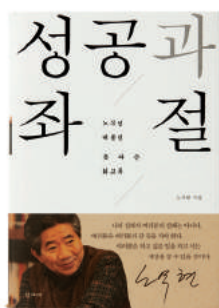
What We're Reading



The End of the World, Girlfriend



River of No Return



Successes and Failures



The Private Life of My Child



A Magpie on the Gallows

Fiction

1Q84

Murakami Haruki, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp., 2009, 650p, ISBN 978-89-546-0865-7
This novel deals with a modern society that is under the influence of a small cult group. It uses the structure of *1984*, George Orwell's novel about the advent of state control, called Big Brother in the book, over people's private lives.

The Crucible

Gong Ji-young, Changbi Publishers, Inc., 2009, 292p, ISBN 978-89-364-3370-3
This novel is based on news coverage and interviews with children who were the victims of repetitive sexual abuse at a school for the handicapped, which took place a few years ago in a small Korean city.

The Winner Stands Alone

Paulo Coelho, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp., 2009, 320p, ISBN 978-89-546-0848-0
In the backdrop of the Cannes Film Festival in France, multiple people—a Russian billionaire, his ex-wife, and a world-famous fashion designer who loves her—are murdered, revealing both the bright and dark sides of the upper class.

The End of the World, Girlfriend

Kim Yeon-su, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp., 2009, 318p, ISBN 978-89-546-0882-4
A collection of nine short stories in which the characters bear the loss of loved ones or broken hearts, such as a middle-aged woman who couldn't forget her lover who passed away 13 years ago or a father who suddenly lost his son.

God

Bernard Werber, Open Books, 2009, 336p, ISBN 978-89-3290-883-0
An interesting story in which a game played to select gods reveals the secrets of the human soul.

River of No Return

Kim Hoon, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp., 2009, 318p, ISBN 978-89-546-0899-2
The author had worked as a journalist for over 30 years in which he witnessed the morbid reality of Korean society—officers' corruption, illicit organ trafficking, and child abuse, all which he puts to use in this full-length novel.

The Kite Runner

Khaled Hosseini, Yolimwon Publishing Co., 2007, 564p, ISBN 978-89-7063-575-0
An Afghanistan boy's coming of age story as he deals with his country's history of Russian and American invasions for over 20 years.

The Time Traveler's Wife

Audrey Niffenegger, Sallim Publishing Co., 2009, 418p, ISBN 978-89-522-1229-0
This is the love story of Henry, who because of a genetic disorder, had to travel through time, and Claire, the woman he was destined to be with.

Nonfiction

Successes and Failures

Roh Moo-hyun, Hakgojae, 2009, 278p, ISBN 978-89-5625-096-0 03810
A memoir of untold stories by the late Roh Moo-hyun, the 16th President of the Republic of Korea, who passed away in 2009.

To Go Farther, Walk Together

Lee Jong-sun, Woongjin ThinkBig Co., Ltd., 2009, 288p, ISBN 978-89-01-09843-2
The author, who insists that charisma is required to succeed, reveals how to make people favor you.

The Private Life of My Child

EBS, The Private Life of My Child Production Team, Sigongsa, 2009, 439p, ISBN 978-89-527-5598-8
A treasure box that reveals useful information about how to raise your children well, such as the secrets of the brain, different characteristics of sons and daughters, the multi-intelligences theory, morality, and self-esteem.

Discovering the Beauty of Korea

Bae Yongjoon, Seed Paper, 2009, 432p, ISBN 978-89-93976-04-5
Bae Yongjoon, an actor famous throughout Asia, hits the road looking for beautiful Korean landscapes.

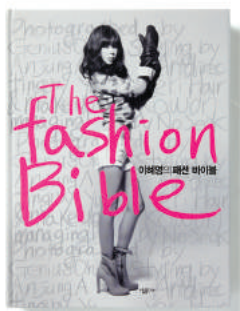
Papepopo Rainbow

Shim Seung-hyeon, Wisdomhouse Publishing Co., Ltd., 2009, 220p, ISBN 978-89-59134-10-6
This is a new edition of the *Papepopo Rainbow* series, which has sold over two million copies since its publication in 2002. This is the love story of Pape and Popo written as a comic book.

The Owner's Manual for Life

Kim Hongshin, Hainaim Publishing Co., Ltd., 2009, 192p, ISBN 978-89-7337-063-4
Just like a manual created for the correct usage of a product, this manual shows how to live life correctly.

These list totals are based on sales records from eight major bookstores and three on-line bookstores from August to October 2009, provided by the Korean Publishers Association. The books are introduced in no particular order.



Lee Hye-young's Fashion Bible



A House Full of Laughter Everyday



Royal Road to Learning



Single Volume Pictures Encyclopedia of Occupations



It's OK

A Magpie on the Gallows

Chin Jung-kwon, Humanist, 2009, 288p
ISBN 978-89-5862-290-1

Chin, a cultural critic, political essayist, and aesthete, to name a few of his occupations, creatively introduces 12 paintings that gave him inspiration.

Lee Hye-young's Fashion Bible

Lee Hye-young, Sallim Publishing Co., 2009, 250p
ISBN 978-89-522-1095-1

Lee, an actress and CEO of a fashion company, reveals the secrets to her fashion style. This book includes everything about trendy fashion know-how.

A House Full of Laughter Everyday

Ven, Pomnyun Sunim, Gimm-Young Publishers, Inc. 2009, 224p, ISBN 978-89-349-3556-8

This counseling book provides practical ways to solve never-ending family problems.

Children's Books

Escape from Angkor Wat

Comiccom, I-Seumcomics, 2009, 190p
ISBN 978-89-378-8021-6

In the 13th century, Angkor Wat was a highly civilized city with a population six times that of Venice. In this historic comic book, the secrets of Angkor Wat are revealed.

Royal Road to Learning, Vol. 1 – Memory

Lee Hyungjung; Illustrator: Kim Juhee, Sigongsa 2009, 176p, ISBN 978-89-527-5624-4

This comic book instructs how to study efficiently and how to remember what you have learned long term. Scientific analysis and cases are included.

Treasure Hunting in Israel

Gomdori co; Illustrator: Kang Gyung-hyo, I-Seumcomics 2009, 195p, ISBN 978-89-378-1355-9

Explore the world through the *History Comics* series. This volume deals with Israeli history and Jewish culture.

Happy Virus

Ahn Cheolsoo, Illustrator: Won Sunghyun Ligem Publishing Company, 2009, 136p
ISBN 978-89-9282-625-9

Ahn Cheolsoo, one of the greatest developers of computer anti-virus vaccines and a medical doctor, tells readers about his dreams and successes.

Single Volume Pictures Encyclopedia of Occupations

Cho Eunju, Yu Soojung, Illustrator: Ma Jungwon Junsun Publishing Co., 2009, 272p
ISBN 978-89-7221-619-3

All the careers that exist in the world are categorized into 12 fields in this book that deals with how to pursue each career, what they really involve, what is rewarding about each career, and other useful information, along with interesting illustrations.

How to Study English

Cho Seung-yeon, Kim Yoon-joung
Illustrator: Lim Young-ran, Hansol Education, 2009 152p, ISBN 978-89-535-6312-4

The author, who moved to an English speaking country when he was 13 years old, instructs on how to efficiently learn English, which is widely spoken in the world.

Bookworms

Ahn So-young, Illustrator: Kang Nammi, Borim Press 2005, 288p, ISBN 978-89-433-0584-0

This is a historical story about Lee Deokmu, a scholar who prioritized practical studies in the late Joseon era, and his friends who loved to read.

Letters from Chojeong-ni

Bae Yu-an, Changbi Publishers, Inc., 2007, 208p
ISBN 978-89-364-3357-4

A friendship strikes up between a king who went to the country Chojungri to cure his eye disease, and a local boy. Their friendship continues via letters.

It's OK

Choi Sookhee, Woongin ThinkBig Co., Ltd., 2009, 28p
ISBN 978-89-01-05292-2

This picture book for children explains that, by comparing the lives of animals, everyone can do at least one thing well. The vivid illustrations will capture children's attention.

Why Don't You Say It Without Crying?

Lee Chan-kyu, Illustrator: Kim Jung-ae Doosan Dong-A Corporation, 2005, 32p
ISBN 89-002-0258-8

For children who cannot express what they want with words, this encouraging painting book explains how to speak. The book is made of sponge to provide readers with extra tactile enjoyment.

A Rush of Science Fiction Novels



prize money, had a big impact.” With the awards focusing more on popular appeal than literary merit, a door has opened up for science fiction. It also helps that the generation who grew up reading classic works of science fiction by writers from abroad, such as Arthur C. Clarke, are now editors at publishing companies, and that young readers familiar with Hollywood blockbusters, which often deal with science fiction, respond positively to science fiction novels.

Despite the recent growth, the scale of the science fiction market in Korea is still meager. Experts estimate the number of science fiction writers in Korea to be from about 50 to 60, with a readership between three to five thousand people. On the other hand, this could mean that the Korean market has infinite potential, since it is only in its infancy.

Tower by Bae Myoung-hoon is set against the backdrop of “Beanstalk,” a gigantic building 2,408 meters high consisting of 674 floors, and occupied by a population of 500,000. Bae satirizes the reality through this story in which a building is a city-nation in itself. Though a work of science fiction, a genre traditionally overlooked in the Korean book world, the novel has gained the attention of the mainstream press and has been reviewed by newspapers and magazines.

By Shin Junebong

One of the most remarkable changes in the Korean publishing market is that there has been an increase in the publication of science fiction novels by Korean writers. To begin with, *U, Robot*, a collection of 10 short stories by 10 science fiction writers, was published by Golden Bough Publishing Co., Ltd. In the second half of the year, *Tower*, a full-length novel by Bae Myoung-hoon, recognized as a promising science fiction writer, and *Tell the Dead*, a collection of 10 short science fiction stories, came out one after the other. Kim Lee-hwan, a science fiction writer, won the Multi Literary Award and the accompanying prize of 100 million won with his full-length novel, *The Sphere of Despair*, in which a huge, mysterious black sphere appears.

The increasing publication of Korean science fiction seems to be the result of a variety of factors combined. Kim Chang-gyu, a science fiction writer, translator, and editor, said that, “It looks like the various literary awards established by one newspaper after another, with hefty sums of

Samsung released the “Papyrus,” Neolux distributed the “NUTT series,” and iriver, a major MP3 player manufacturer, began selling “iriver Story,” all which lead the world in portability and user-friendliness.

The factor that determines the success of the e-book business, however, is not the portable reader device itself, but the contents. Korean telecommunication companies such as KT and SKT, and major book distributors such as Kyobo Bookstore and Interpark, are at war to secure competitive material for e-books. Armed with large budgets and distributing networks, they are aggressively pursuing business partnerships with publishers. Many publishers were a part of the now bankrupt consortium e-book company Booktopia, but, not wanting to lose the market to large companies, they have forged on and established the Korean Publishing Contents (KPC) in hopes of securing leadership in the market.

By Richard Hong

Please Look After Mom Passes Million Mark

The most fascinating newsmaker in the Korean publishing market for the second half of 2009 is Shin Kyung-sook. *Please Look After Mom*, a full-length novel published in November 2008, made a breakthrough sale of a million copies in early September, 10 months after its initial publication. Despite the small scale of the publishing market in Korea, a million seller isn't all that rare. In the 1990s, the novel *Who Ate All the Shing-a?* by Pak Wansuh, and the novel *My Sister, Bongsoon*, by Gong Ji-young, each sold over a million copies. In 2007, *Song of the Sword*, volumes one and two, by Kim Hoon, a journalist turned novelist, made their way to the million seller list. *Please Look After Mom*, however, is remarkable in that it rose to the position of a million-seller in a relatively short period of time, and under adverse circumstances due to the economic crisis.

According to Changbi, the publisher, *Please Look After Mom* had a monthly sales record of between 63,000 and 142,000

Korean E-book Fever

This year's Frankfurt Book Fair was packed with various seminars and conferences related to e-books. Google, for example, has planned to build an electronic library, but there have been severe objections within the EU. Therefore, Google presented a solution titled, “Google Editions,” at the Frankfurt Book Fair to emphasize the necessity of an electronic library. Out of all of the books exhibited during the fair, over 40 percent were e-book-related, proving the quick development of e-books. Recently, e-books have become a hot item in the Korean book market. Korean manufactured portable reader devices are evaluated to be better than the Amazon Kindle. This fall,

copies. The readers ranged from teenagers to those in their 50s. Older people in their 60s and 70s showed up as well at book signings held at major bookstores. The novel is indeed a “national novel,” to put it in terms of a popular Korean phrase.

To celebrate the sales of a million copies, Changbi plans to produce an audio book version of *Please Look After Mom* to be distributed to the illiterate and the visually impaired. Top-class radio performers took part in the production of the audio book. Overseas markets have been showing a positive response to the book as well—its copyright has been sold to 14 countries.

The book is about the disappearance of a mother of five, whose family goes out in search of her. The love the family has for the mother is expressed through the alternating points of view of the daughter, the sons, and the husband. In addition, the chapter narrated from the mother's point of view reveals her hidden, lifelong love.

By Shin Junebong

Secrets to Business When Times are Tough

In the 1960s, South Korea saw the birth of conglomerates. These first-generation businesses were born in a financially favorable climate with the active support of the government. In the 1970s, a second generation of large-scale companies was created without help from the government. These businesses enjoyed domestic competitive power to such an extent that they gave rise to plutocrat myths. However, the situation changed drastically with the economic crises of 1997 and 2008. With the exception of a few companies, such as Samsung, Hyundai, LG, and SK, many businesses either collapsed or faced grave dangers.

However, regardless of these pressures, there still exists a few second-generation businesses that have done more than merely stay afloat. How on earth did these relative newcomers not only survive, but also find such success in a turbulent time when global companies are helplessly collapsing?

We introduce books by two representatives from this generation of companies:

CEO Yoon Seok-keum of WoongJin Group who has published *Positivity Creates a Masterpiece* and Lee Seung-han of Home Plus who has published *Creative Virus H2C*. In these books, they share the wisdom of their lives as they reveal the hardships they endured at the start of their businesses and how they managed to overcome these obstacles.

WoongJin Group began in 1980 as a small educational publishing company with seven employees. Today, it has grown into a large enterprise with 14 affiliated companies in seven business areas with yearly target sales of 520 billion Korean won. CEO Yoon got his start in the 1970s as a salesman with the Korean branch of Britannica, and went on to become the top Britannica salesman for selling the most English encyclopedias in the world. In his book *Positivity Creates a Masterpiece*, Yoon shares two secrets for his success: one, that a businessman must consider every crisis as an opportunity, and two, that it is crucial to have a positive outlook on every matter.

CEO Lee Seung-han of Home Plus began his career as an employee at a conglomerate. He then became a key player in shaping Korea's distribution industry through his success with Home Plus. In a time when the distribution industry was largely relegated to selling products from warehouse-style marts, he found success by attempting something completely new. In his book *Creative Virus H2C*, Lee credits creativity as the leading reason for his success.

Although the U.S. financial crisis has slowed the sale of business and economic manuals in Korea, the inspiring stories of how these two CEOs were able to transform a crisis into a positive force are sure to change the tide.

By Han Mihwa





The General's Mustache (1968)

Korean Cinema and Literature

Reliving the Korean Film Renaissance (1950s-1960s)

After the liberation from Japanese rule in 1945, the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, and the declaration of a cease-fire in 1953, Korean society began its reconstruction phase in earnest. Amidst the wave of Western modernism—best represented by American culture—audiences became enamored with the glamorous American life shown in Hollywood genre films.

Poet and literary critic Lim Wha once stated that cinema in the Joseon era first began by “cooperating with different neighboring cultures.” In fact, throughout its history, Korean cinema has constantly negotiated and merged with different art forms. It probably goes without saying that Korean cinema has always maintained a close relationship with literature. Traditional classic novels that are familiar to native Koreans, popular novels including newspaper serials, and literary fiction, which guaranteed the artistic level of the film, were always in constant demand from the film industry.

As is well known, a screenplay is the basic foundation for a film; without a screenplay, a film cannot exist. And screenplays, of course, consist of words; and therefore, screenplays and literature are related at the most basic level. Also, finding a good novel to adapt for a film can also mean considerably lowering film production costs. More than any other art form, filmmaking is a costly endeavor, and often times a popular novel serves as a financial safety net for film productions. For example, a popular novel can continue to be loved by the public as a radio play, then subsequently as a film. This section focuses on how film and

literature engaged with and influenced each other during the 50s and 60s, a time when Korean cinema rose to prominence and entered a glorious renaissance period.

The Popular Novel: the Seed of 1950s Korean Popular Film

After finally being liberated from the Japanese on August 15, 1945, Korean filmmakers struggled to free themselves from Japanese influences and produce film independently. But the start of the Korean War on June 25, 1950, seriously stalled their efforts. This didn't deter filmmakers; not wanting to leave a vacuum in Korean cinema history, the filmmakers continued to make films by mostly producing newsreels and documentaries for the military and its associated organizations.

Of course this doesn't mean filmmakers stopped producing feature length films during this period. The Korean War period was a time when the future giants of Korean cinema such as Shin Sang-ok (1926-2006), Kim Ki-young (1919-1998), and Yu Hyun-mok (1925-2009) each sought to make their directorial debut. While seeking refuge in Daegu, Shin Sang-ok made his directorial debut: a film adaptation of Kim Gwang-ju's short story, "The Evil Night." In "The Evil Night," a prostitute helps out a writer and lets him spend the night in her room. The writer is shocked by the realities of the streets—a miniature version of society. The themes of social indictment in the original story are well represented in the film version, and today this film is considered to be a touchstone of Korean cinematic realism.

On July 27, 1953, a cease-fire was declared, and along with the people's return to the capital, Korean society promptly entered its reconstruction phase. At the time, Koreans were overwhelmed by a wave of western style modernization, which was best represented by American culture. Audiences especially were enamored with the glamorous American culture shown in Hollywood genre films, and Korean melodramas set in chic urban settings became equally popular.

During the mid to late 1950s, the primary source of mainstream Korean film was the popular novel, especially those written by authors including Kim Mal-bong, Park Gyeju, Chung



Madame Freedom (1956)

Bi-suk, and Kim Lae-sung. No discussion of this period would be complete without mentioning *Madame Freedom*, an immensely popular novel by Chung Bi-suk, which was serialized in *The Seoul Shinmun* from January 1, 1954 to August 6, 1954. The story dealt with social issues such as the "mutual aid-group craze," the "dance craze," and the "overspending craze." At the time of its serialization, the story was harshly criticized as "...a national enemy as equally dangerous as five hundred thousand enemies." The film version from 1956, directed by Han Hyung-mo, was probably the most controversial film in Korean cinema history. The original story is about a professor's wife who catches the dance bug and begins an adulterous relationship. The film, which recreates the novel's sensational subject through sensuous images, was unable to pass censorship even right before its release. Only after some of the kissing scenes were cut was it released. Eventually *Madame Freedom* became the blockbuster Korean film of the 1950s.

Director Han Hyung-mo was not afraid to venture into different genres. Considered to be at the vanguard of 1950s Korean popular cinema, the director fully embraced popular literature in order to expand his viewership. In 1957, he directed the film version of Park Gyeju's *The Pure Love*, a novel about platonic love that was eventually reprinted over 30 times. Director Hong Seong-ki, considered the giant of late 1950s Korean melodrama, also adapted two of Park Gyeju's novels into films: *The Star in My Heart*, made in 1958, and *Waking or Sleeping*, in 1959. The works of Kim Lae-sung were a frequent source of inspiration for directors of Korean-style genre films; they include *Lover* (1956) and *The Star of Lost Paradise* (1957), both directed by Hong Sung-ki, and what is considered to be the first-ever Korean detective film, *The Devil* (1957), directed by Han Hyung-mo.



Madame Freedom (1956)



The Star of Lost Paradise (1957)



Mother and a Guest (1961)



Aimless Bullet (1961)



The Curse of Kim's Daughters (1963)

The 1960s and the Literary Cinema Boom

Sixties Korean cinema began with director Yu Hyun-mok's masterpiece, *Aimless Bullet* (1961), which is still considered one of the best Korean films of all time. Adapted from a short story written by Lee Beom-seon, this literary film cinematically captured the poverty and mental anxiety of postwar Korean society. That same year, Shin Sang-ok released *Mother and a Guest* (1961), a film adaptation of a story by Joo Yoseop that subtly portrayed the conflict between feudalistic codes and women; with this film, the director inched one step closer to the level of an auteur. Director Kim Soo-yong's 1965 film adaptation of Oh Young-soo's *The Seaside Village* is considered to be the film that sparked the literary cinema boom. The women divers and the potent beauty of primal sex detailed in the original is beautifully transferred onto the screen through Kim Soo-yong's unique cinematic language.

In 1966, the government passed a law concerning Korean films; and in order to promote and reward excellent Korean films, the government initiated the foreign film screen quota system. Films that were considered excellent by the government were anti-communist films, educational films, and literary films. The flood of literary films from 1966 to 1968 is a result of government policies. Originally, "literary film" was a term used for film adaptations of artistically renowned literary novels, but due to the government's reward policies, it became a widely used term for a film with high artistic value—even if it wasn't an adaptation of a novel.

No discussion about the literary films of the 60s would be complete without mentioning director Yu Hyun-mok. His films include *The Curse of Kim's Daughters* (1963, from a novel by Pak Kyongni), a tragic film about a family caught between shamanism and modernism, fate and will; *The Guests of the Last Train* (1967, from a novel by Hong Seong-won), a film about an intellectual's despair in a society with no exits; and *Descendants of Cain* (1968, from a novel by Hwang Sun-won), a film about the countryside in post-liberation era North Korea, which confounds our notions of left and right, and good and evil. Through these literary films and many more he became an active film director working within the Chungmuro studio system.

Director Kim Soo-yong was also one of the masters of the literary film genre. The director was famous for being prolific; in 1967 alone, he made 10 films. But still, through excellent films such as *Full Ship* (from a story by Chun Seungsei), *Flame in the Valley* (from a play by Cha Bumsuk), *Mist* (from a story by Kim Sung-ok), and *Sound of Magpies* (from a story by Kim Dongni) he proved his consistency as a filmmaker. His incredible productivity is largely due to his preference for films based on novels. Especially worth noting is *Mist*, an adaptation of Kim Sung-ok's "Journey to Mujin." This film shows director Kim Soo-yong, inspired by European modernism, trying his hand at depicting a modernist film language. The author Kim Sung-ok handled the screenplay and also wrote the lyrics to the theme song for the film. This film was the start of a fruitful film career for author Kim Sung-ok. After this film, he wrote numerous screenplays for the Chungmuro studio system, and with *Potato* (1968), he made his directorial debut with a film adaptation of Kim Dong-in's eponymous novel. In addition, he won the 7th annual Daejong Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for his work on *The General's Mustache* (1968).

The General's Mustache, a film adaptation of a story by Lee O-Young, is considered to be a masterpiece of Korean modernism. The film deals with the loneliness and isolation of the modern man, and director Lee Seong-gu, who dreamed of creating the Korean nouvelle-vague, effectively utilizes the screen languages of modern cinema to handle this cerebral theme. The director's other efforts include *When Buckwheat Flowers Blossom* (1967, from a story by Lee Hyo-seok), a film with a traditional Korean folk setting that deals with the trials and tribulations of wandering peddlers; *A Plateau* (1969, from a story by Chung Bi-suk), a film about a fateful love affair that arises from ideological conflict; 7



Mist (1967)



The General's Mustache (1968)

People in the Cellar (1969, from a play by Yoon Jo-byung), a story of a man without any hope, and the will of a clergyman who yearns for the man's salvation. Through such literary films, director Lee Seung-gu reached new aesthetic heights by not merely telling the story but showing the story.

Through novels already proven popular with the public, commercial film directors were able to develop distinctly Korean genre films, and for aesthetically ambitious directors, adapting renowned novels into films enabled them to reach new artistic levels. During the developments of the 50s and the golden period of the 60s, literature stimulated both blockbusters as well as art films that are an important part of Korean cinema history. And by doing so, it expanded the level and depth of Korean films.

*For those interested in Korean films based on Korean novels, among the films mentioned in this article, *Madame Freedom*, *Mother and a Guest*, and *The Guest of the Last Train* are available on DVD as part of the Korean Film Archive Classic Film Collection DVD Series. English subtitles included.

*images courtesy of Korean Film Archive

By Chung Chong-hwa
(researcher, Korean Film Archive)



1. *Potato*

Kim Dong-in, Moonji Publishing Co., Ltd., 2009, 454p
ISBN 89-320-1553-8

2. *Descendants of Cain*

Hwang Sun-won, Moonji Publishing Co., Ltd., 2009, 593p
ISBN 89-320-1669-0

3. *The Curse of Kim's Daughters*

Pak Kyongni, Nanam Publishing House, 2009, 387p
ISBN 978-89-300-0529-6

4. *Journey to Mujin*

Kim Sung-ok, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp., 2009, 439p
ISBN 89-8281-866-9 (set)



Mandara (1981)

© Hwa Chun Trading Co., Ltd.

Korean Cinema and Literature

Literary and Cinematic Imagination Rising from the Darkness (1970s-mid 1990s)

During the time of rule by military dictatorship to riding the historical wave of democracy, the boundaries between literature and cinema naturally crumbled and interaction between the two fields increased. Turning bestselling novels into blockbuster films was a major trend at the time.

During this period, Korean culture was considered to be at a crossroads of darkness and light. Under military dictatorships that began in the 70s and lasted until the early 90s, there were limits to what artists could express. But with the advent of the so-called *hangeul* generation, growing interest in popular culture and the wave of democracy all led to the deluge of popular culture seen in the 90s. Within this historical context, the boundaries between literature and cinema naturally crumbled, and the interaction between the two fields increased. Certain authors not only started

writing screenplays early on, but also began to participate in film productions. And some authors went on to forge steady partnerships with specific directors.

From the late 60s to the 70s, author Kim Sung-ok was without equal. Considered to be one of the best modernist writers of the 60s, his writing defined an era. But before Kim Sung-ok made his literary debut, he worked as a newspaper cartoonist. And even after he became an author, he also worked as a screenplay writer and a film director. In his autobiography, *The Lord I Met*, the author



Hometown of the Stars (1974)



The March of Fools (1975)



A Dwarf Launches a Little Ball (1981)

*images courtesy of Korean Film Archive

says that after he directed *Potato* (1968), he anguished over whether to continue working as a director or to commit fully to his life as an author. Of course, his film, *Potato* is by no means a masterpiece, but it should be noted that he helped usher in the 70s: a time when film and cinema blossomed together. And this proves how multi-talented he was.

Kim Sung-ok began his career with a political cartoon called *Old Man Pagoda*. Korea was then at the height of what is called the 4.19 student-led revolt, a turning point for Korean news organizations. His first screenplay was for *Mist*, a film adaptation of his most famous short story, "Journey to Mujin." *Mist*, directed by Kim Soo-yong, went on to become an important film in Korean cinema history. Screenplays for director Lee Jang-ho's *Hometown of the Stars* and director Kim Ho-sun's *Yeong-ja's Heydays* were both written by Kim Sung-ok. *Hometown of the Stars* was based on a bestselling novel by Choi In-ho, an author who, in the 70s, effortlessly crossed the boundaries between serious literature and popular culture. *Yeong-ja's Heydays* was based on a bestselling novel by Jo Seon-jak.

Bestselling novels becoming blockbuster films were a major trend at the time. Most bestsellers were first serialized in newspapers. At the time, people followed these stories as closely as they would a television soap opera. Serialized stories then went on to become novels, and they usually became bestsellers the moment they were released. It was an important industry practice then for film producers to buy the rights to serialized stories around the time they ended.

As mentioned earlier, there were three bestselling novels that shook up Korean popular culture in the 70s: Jo Seon-jak's *Yeong-ja's Heydays*, Choi In-ho's *Hometown of the Stars*, and Jo Hae-il's *Winter Woman*. These stories all feature a young female protagonist, whose names became iconic in the 70s. Youngja, Kyungha, and Leehwa were their names, and they came to represent an era. Among these characters, both Youngja and Kyungha are hostesses, or prostitutes. And the fact that the female characters of two major bestselling novels from the 70s happen to be prostitutes speaks volumes about the era. These characters represent the lives of lower class women who came to the city expecting better opportunities; they also represent a period when women were becoming more and more commodified. These works also comment on the era by having their female protagonists meet tragic deaths.

Among these bestselling writers of the 70s, Choi In-ho's accomplishments definitely stand out. During the 70s, the author often teamed up with one of the best directors at the time, Ha Gil-jong. We can see from numerous articles that Ha Gil-jong treated Cho In-ho like his own sibling, and the director often let the author participate in the filmmaking process. The most famous film from this partnership is *The March of Fools*. It was first serialized in a college newspaper, then was a novel, and finally was made into a movie. *The March of Fools* was about the 70s college culture, and both the novel and the film came to represent the youth culture of the 70s. While the film was a portrait of young Koreans back then, it was also a portrait of the writer and the director.

In the 80s, Cho In-ho begins to collaborate with a new director: Bae Chang-ho. After the sudden death of Ha Gil-jong in the late 70s, the author was in need of a new cinematic partner. And in Bae Chang-ho, he found a master director who breathed new life into his novels. Their collaboration began with *The Flower at the Equator* in 1983. *Whale Hunt*, from 1984, was a road movie, a genre that many Koreans were unfamiliar with at the time. *Deep Blue Night*, released the following year, was yet another successful collaborative effort. The film, which deals with the phoniness of the American dream, looks unflinchingly at the illusion and horror of the Americanism that swept the nation in the 80s. The two went on to make a wide range of films including *Hello God*. The last film they made together was *Stairways of Heaven*, in 1991. It was an end of a long and fruitful partnership, which is still considered to be one of the greatest in Korean cinema history. Choi In-ho's novels became successful

films by other directors as well. The best example of this is director Kwak Jik-yoon's 1986 film, *Winter Wanderer*. The enormous success of this film is a good indication of how popular the author was at the time.

There were, of course, other prominent authors besides Choi In-ho at the time. In the 80s, with Yi Mun-yol leading the pack, we began to see a variety of authors. Compared to Choi In-ho's brand of romanticism, these authors displayed a more socially critical outlook. Yi Mun-yol and the other authors' works caught the attention of many new directors of this period. Im Kwon-taek is one of the greatest Korean directors working today. Starting in the early 80s, he began to make a string of noteworthy films that were unlike any of his efforts from the previous decade. His films such as *Tears of the Idol* (1981), based on author Jeon Sang-guk's eponymous novel, and *Mandara* (1981), a faithful film adaptation of author Kim Seong-dong's philosophical Buddhist novel, represent the achievements of early 80s Korean literature. Cho Se-hui's *A Dwarf Launches a Little Ball*—one of the greatest bestselling novels in Korea of all time—rose from the darkness to become a film by director Lee Won-se.

After the mid-80s, we began to see more author and director partnerships, and this immensely diversified Korean film culture. A good example is director Lee Jang-ho's *A Wanderer Never Stops on the Road*, which is based on a novel by Lee Jaha. Lee Jang-ho's film, which connects the pains of a divided country with Korean shamanism, is undoubtedly one of the greatest auteur films of the 1980s. Director Lee Jang-ho scored a huge hit in the 70s with a film adaptation of Choi In-ho's novel, *Hometown of the Stars*. And during the 80s, his films became much more personal and introspective in nature. And by tackling the film adaptation of Lee Jaha's novel, the director also ventured into experimental cinema.

Yi Mun-yol was one of the most highly regarded writers of the 80s. Many of his novels were turned into films, the first being *Son of a Man* in 1981. *After That Which Falls Has Wings* in 1990 and *Our Twisted Hero* in 1992, his influence became even more far-reaching. *Our Twisted Hero*, which takes place in an elementary school, is a fable-like story that deals with issues of power and authority; and both the novel and the film displayed the essential core of the writer's worldview. Yi Mun-yol's novels usually take the rite of passage structure often seen in classic German novels, and the beauty of his elegant prose made him one of the best writers of his generation. After



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A Wanderer Never Stops on the Road (1987)



The Road to Racetrack (1991)



Our Twisted Hero (1992)



White Badge (1992)



© Kiweckshidae

From Me to You (1994)



1. *The Road to Race Track*
Hailji, Minumsa, 2005, 701p
ISBN 89-374-2015-5

2. *From Me to You*
Jang Jung-il, Gimm-Young Publishers, Inc.
2005, 365p, ISBN 89-349-1971-X

the 80s, a time when Yi Mun-yol dominated the literary scene, in the 90s, authors such as Ma Kwangsoo, Hailji, and Jang Jung-il—who fused sex with literature—caught the attention of the public.

Director Jang Sunwoo focused on transferring these writers' words to the big screen. His adaptation of Hailji's *The Road to Racetrack* (1991) spawned the famous "What is your ideology?" line and became a huge hit. And in 1994, with the film adaptation of Jang Jung-il's *From Me to You*, forcefully brought the issue of sexuality into Korean cinema. Other film adaptations of Jang Jung-il novels include director Kim Ho-sun's *When Adam Opens His Eyes* (1993). Author Ahn Jung Hyo's *White Badge* and *The Silver Stallion Will Never Come* were also turned into films. Ahn Jung Hyo's novels cultivated a new field for Korean literature: the horror and trauma of war.

In the early 90s, Korean society was swept by a wave of democratization. During this period, rather than one particular director or writer dominating the scene, we witnessed the rise of a variety of works that crossed the boundaries between the sacred and the profane. Bold depictions of sex made their way into not only literature but to the big screen as well, offering a fresh perspective on taboo subject matters as a result. While the works of Ahn Jung

Hyo were concerned with issues such as understanding the war generation and the repressive nature of the past, the stories of Hailji and Jang Jung-il, as filtered through the lens of Jang Sunwoo, perfectly captured the spirit of the 90s. Their focus was more on the sentiments of the urban individual rather than the scars of history. Of course the scars of history can still be felt in lines like "What is your ideology?" But in Jang Jung-il's *When Adam Opens His Eyes*, we see a man (not a woman) engaging in sexual activities just to buy the things he wishes to possess. This coming-of-age tale mirrors the spirit of the 90s.

By Lee Sang-yong
(film critic, Pusan International Film Festival Programmer)



3. *Tears of the Idol*
Jeon Sang-guk, Minumsa, 2009, 367p
ISBN 978-89-374-2005-4

4. *A Dwarf Launches a Little Ball*
Cho Se-hui, Iseonggywa Him, 2008, 351p
ISBN 89-951512-0-X 03810

5. *Son of a Man*
Yi Mun-yol, Minumsa, 2009, 386p
ISBN 978-89-374-8048-5

6. *Deep Blue Night*
Choi In-ho, Jisikdumi, 2007, 213p
ISBN 978-89-7124-083-0

7. *A Wanderer Never Stops on the Road*
Lee Jeha, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp.
2008, 295p, ISBN 89-8281-174-5 03810



Secret Sunshine (2007)

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Korean Cinema and Literature

Novels in the Age of One-Source Multi-Usage (Late 1990s-Today)

In this age that we call the post-capitalism age, where art is diffused into as many different forms as possible and where art is transformed into a speculative commodity, at a time when the crisis of literature and the death of literature is constantly being discussed, ironically, the demand for novels as original stories for films is now greater than ever.

From the mid-90s up to now, out of the newly coined phrases to appear during this period, the most culturally relevant phrase, is probably “one-source multi-usage.” The phrase describes a phenomenon where one cultural item becomes reinterpreted and disseminated into different formats and genres. A good example: the play *Yi* was turned into a film, and the script for the play was used for the film version as well. Strictly speaking, this unfamiliar and foreign term is related to a process that is normally referred to as an adaptation. Adaptation usually involves a single process; for example, a play gets turned into a movie, or a novel is adapted into a film. On the other hand, with the phrase “one-source multi-

usage,” the focus is on the word “multi.” In other words, the idea is to disseminate a single artwork into as many different genres as possible. In this age of post-capitalism, where the value of cultural content is evaluated in terms of investment and profit, it’s necessary to make the most out of a single source.

This phenomenon coincides with the advent of the “10 million film,” a film that attracts over 10 million viewers. The success of director Lee Joon-ik’s *King and the Clown* (2005) was unexpected and came as a surprise to everyone. Worth noting here is the fact that this film is an adaptation of the play *Yi*. A film adaptation of a play becoming successful has its precedent in director Bong



King and the Clown (2005)



Memories of Murder (2003)



Ardor (2002)

Joon-ho's *Memories of Murder* (2003). Based on *Come to See Me*, a play by Kim Kwang-lim, this film was successful in defining the 80s as an age of ignorance and violence.

Since both the play and the film were based on actual events—the Hwaseong serial murder case of the 80s—after the success of *Memories of Murder*, its relationship with the play *Come to See Me* didn't get much attention. On the other hand, the fact that the author of *Yi* contributed a great deal to director Lee Joon-ik's film version is quite well known. Other examples of plays becoming popular films include *The Big Scene* by director Jang Jin, who directed the original play as well; and *Welcome to Dongmakgol*, director Park Gwang-hyun's film adaptation of Jang Jin's play. The popularity and critical success of films based on plays is one of the unique trends of the new millennium.

A notable trend of the 90s Korean literature scene is the advent of female writers in their mid 30s, and a new form of feminist literature that appeared as a result. Writers such as Eun Hee-kyung, Jeon Gyeong-rin, and Gong Ji-young awoke women from their slumber of motherhood and wifedom and pulled them out of their domestic setting. The best example of this is *Ardor* (2002), director Byun Young-joo's film adaptation of Jeon Gyeong-rin's novel *A Special Day That Comes in My Life*. Gong Ji-young, the author of *Mackerel* and *Go Alone Like Musso's Horn*, and Shin Kyong-sook, the author of *Deep Sorrow*, both became bestselling authors and many of their novels were adapted into films. The feminism of Gong Ji-young and Jeon Gyeong-rin is different from the feminine sensibility displayed in Shin Kyong-sook's novels. But what these authors all share in common is the fact that they created a new type of femininity with the support of a female readership.

In discussing film adaptations of novels after the mid-90s, one phenomenon we can't leave out is the adaptation of online novels. The first online novel to reach the big screen was *The Soul Guardians* (1998). This fantasy adventure film, which was serialized on Hitel, an online portal site, holds an important place in Korean cinema history. *My Sassy Girl* didn't just treat this phenomenon as a mere fad but fully embraced it. It became a huge hit and was enthusiastically received by not only fans of the original but the general movie-going public as well. *My Sassy Girl* (2001), titled *The Bizarre Girl* in Korean, was also a popular online novel before it was made into a film. At the time, Korean popular culture was obsessed with all things "bizarre." Before, "bizarre" was an adjective used only to describe murder or heinous acts, but after the success of *My Sassy Girl*, the Korean word for "bizarre" became a word that described anything that was either strange or peculiar. Befitting the Guiyeoni-mania of this period, Guiyeoni's novels were turned into films three times: *Romance of Their Own* (2004), which helped actor Kang Dong-won become a heartthrob, *Doremifasollasido* (2008), and *He Was Cool* (2004). Despite questionable literary and ethical values, due to their online popularity, these stories were quickly adapted into films. What's rather problematic is the fact that, excluding *My Sassy Girl* and *Romance of Their Own*, film versions of online novels didn't fare too well at the box office.

By the mid-90s, anxiety over the future of literature reached a boiling point. Faced with the onslaught of new mediums, literary magazines were quick to discuss the diminishing stature and the death of literature. But ironically, as a source of dependable original stories, novels were becoming increasingly important to the film industry. Sometimes the film proved to be more popular than the original story; a good example is director Park Chanwook's second film *JSA: Joint Security Area*, which was based on *DMZ*, a novel by Park Sangyon. In Park Chanwook's film, a uniquely Korean condition—the divided state—is distilled into an image of physical and ideological borders, and by doing so, the director shows us the realities of the divided state as not as an experience but as a visual image.

Novels that are loved by readers are considered to be suitable for film adaptation. In fact, popular novels always become either films or television dramas. And among film adaptations of bestselling novels, *Marriage Is a Crazy Thing* and *My Wife Got Married* deserve special mention. *Marriage Is a Crazy Thing* (2002), director Yoo Ha's film adaptation of Lee Man-gyo's novel,



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Welcome to Dongmakgol (2005)

discusses how Koreans' views of weddings have changed over the years. In doing so, the film directly questions marriage itself. By strongly defining marriage as a "crazy thing," the film criticizes the hypocrisy lying underneath marriage as a system. The female protagonist, Yonhee, leads a double life: she keeps a sexy but economically incapable man as her lover, and keeps a boring but economically stable man as her husband. She's no different from the patriarchs of the past who kept both a wife and a mistress. These men kept virtuous women as wives and sexually attractive women as mistresses. The fact that she so closely resembles these men is quite troublesome. Yoo Ha's film, told from the perspective of the woman's secret lover, is a realistic depiction of the changing times.

Director Chong Yunsu utilizes the concept of polyamour to attack this "crazy" system called marriage. While faithfully following the original story by Park Hyun-wook, the adapted screenplay adds some interesting flourishes; the film links soccer with dating and love with marriage. Various episodes that occur throughout courtship and marriage are discussed through soccer analogies. If *Marriage Is a Crazy Thing* is an honest look at the changed reality, then *My Wife Got Married* is a bold statement on how reality should change: If you love two men at the same time, you should be able to marry them simultaneously.

The Old Garden (2006), director Im Sang-soo's film adaptation of a novel by Hwang Sok-yong, shows us how a recent past, in this case the 80s, can be placed in a contemporary context, and how it can be romanticized. If remembering the past was a major literary trend of the 90s, Hwang Sok-yong's *The Old Garden* displays how this trend can be updated for the new millennium. Director Im Sang-soo uses a more refined method to make this story relevant for the present. *The Old Garden* portrays the prototypical cool sister; the type of older women that boys in the 80s idealized. Today the "cool sisters" are nowhere to be found, and everyone is busy scrambling for a buck. Still, remembering past love affairs and hanging our hopes on the next generation offer us consolation.

A noteworthy trend from the mid-90s to the 2000s is the frequent film adaptations of novels by Yi Chongjun. Director Im Kwon-taek's *Sopyonje*, which was considered a national film in the early 90s, was an adaptation of Yi Chongjun's novel *The People of Namdo*. The film is about Songhwa, who is blinded by her father, and the strong bond between her and her half-brother Dongho. Through cinematographer Jung Il-sung's luminous cinematography and director Im Kwon-taek's sophisticated direction, a profound level of Koreanness is fully realized. *Beyond the Years*, which was also director Im Kwon-taek's hundredth film, is a sequel of sorts to *Sopyonje*, and for the screenplay, Yi Chongjun was directly involved. Unlike the novel, the film adds historical facts such as the Jeju April 3rd civil protests, and fleshes out the relationship between Dongho and Songhwa.

Secret Sunshine (2007), directed by Lee Chang Dong, can be seen as an answer of sorts to a question raised by Yi Chongjun's novel *The Tale of a Bug*. Yi's novel is about a woman who commits suicide after the loss of her child, and *Secret*



© Myung Films

JSA: Joint Security Area (2000)



© Shinene

My Sassy Girl (2001)



© Taehung Pictures

Sopyonje (1993)



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Secret Sunshine (2007)

Sunshine, by using a specific location and the images it conjures up, expands the original story with questions the relationship between man and god, and the primal energy which keeps us going. *Secret Sunshine* is very much like *The Tale of a Bug*, and yet is nothing like the original at the same time.

After the 90s, taste became an important criterion in Korean culture. This is in part due to the diversification of culture, but it also means a change in society from its authoritarian past into a society where relativism was taken more seriously. After the 90s, at a time when taste became an absolute criterion, the novel was at a crisis point, about to be declared dead. Talk of a literary crisis were at an all time high, but at the same time, in this supposedly dreary age of “one-source multi-usage,” the demand for novels as a source for original stories was now greater than ever. From the 90s to the 2000s, literature was in a state of flux. The novel as something sacred and the novel as a source for original stories: today, the state of literature lies somewhere in between.

By Kang Yu-jung
(literary critic, film critic, and editor of *World Literature*)



1. *Go Alone Like Musso's Horn*

Gong Ji-yong, Prunsoop Publishing Co. Ltd.
2006, 325p, ISBN 89-7184-482-5 03810

2. *Come to See Me*

Kim Kwang-lim, Pyungminsa, 2006, 152p
ISBN 89-7115-387-3 03680

3. *A Special Day That Comes Only Once In My Life*

Jeon Gyeong-rin, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp.
2005, 286p, ISBN 89-8281-205-9 03810

4. *Deep Sorrow*

Shin Kyung-sook, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp.
2009, 583p, ISBN 89-546-0127-8 03810

5. *Romance of Their Own*

Guiyeoni, Bandibooks, 2006, 345p
ISBN 89-5804-091-2 (Set)

6. *The Old Garden*

Hwang Sok-yong, Changbi Publishers, Inc.
2007, 331p, ISBN 978-89-364-3590-1

7. *Sopyonje*

Yi Chongjun, Yolimwon Publishing Co.
2009, 223p, ISBN 978-89-7063-158-5 (Set)

8. *Marriage Is a Crazy Thing*

Lee Man-gyo, Minumsa, 2005, 307p
ISBN 89-374-2028-7

9. *Beyond the Years*

Yi Chongjun, Yolimwon Publishing Co.
2007, 147p, ISBN 978-89-7063-551-4 03810

10. *My Wife Got Married*

Park Hyun-wook, Munidang, 2008, 357p
ISBN 89-7456-330-4



A Passionate Solitude: The Life and Writing of Novelist Jo Kyung-ran

Poet Whon Jaeheoun interviewed novelist Jo Kyung-ran, whose novel Tongue has been translated and published in eight countries, broadening her international readership.

One day in October 2009, I found myself talking to Jo Kyung-ran's mother on the phone. Her mother told me that her daughter would return from her writing studio around one p.m. and cheerfully asked me to call back then. I pictured her the way she looked at last year's Dong-in Literary Award ceremony. Jo writes in her studio all night long and returns home at one in the afternoon. Several days later, I bumped into her in a small bakery near Hongik University. I was happy to see her. I debated what to ask her, and in the end, I asked her which questions she hates hearing.

One question Jo hates to receive is, "What has your life been like as a female writer?" The question itself is too abstract, making it difficult to answer, but what particularly troubles her is the term "female writer." That is because it is not simply a term used to distinguish between male and female writers but reveals the sexism behind the implication that there is something especially commendable about a woman trying to write.

During the Joseon dynasty in Korea, women were forbidden from writing. Women did not need to learn how to write, and even if they did, they had no use for it. Nevertheless, there were "female writers" during the Joseon dynasty, such as Heo Nanseolheon, Yi Okbong, and Hwang Jini. The fruits of literature were off-limits for women; therefore, it was fitting to call them "female writers." However, just as we would never say "male writer," it is no longer appropriate to say "female writer." Writers simply happen to be male or female by virtue of birth. Likewise, Jo was born female but writes as a "person." She spoke to me on the subject of her gender.

"I met a geomancer once who asked me, 'Do you think of yourself as a woman?' I said no. When I am writing, I never think of myself as a woman."

Nevertheless, the reason interviewers sometimes go on and on about Jo Kyung-ran as a woman writer may not be due to some particular ill will, but rather because she does come off as feminine. Like the essayist Charles Lamb, I also believe that men like womanly people, and women too, even more, like womanly women. Perhaps that is why I wanted to meet Jo Kyung-ran, who is an especially feminine woman.

I met Jo Kyung-ran under more formal circumstances after reading her novel *Tongue*. It was already the subject of conversation in the literary world, and this much-loved work is now expanding the realm of Korean literature as it has been translated and published in eight countries. I particularly enjoyed this work for its fresh impact on Korean literature.

Ever since the publication of her debut novel *Time for Baking Bread*, Jo had been planning to write *Tongue*, which is also based on the theme of food. But instead of beginning right away, she carried the idea with her for a while, crafting the plot line and writing a sentence only to stop again. The reason she had kept picking up and abandoning the idea was because there were a lot of movies out at the time that dealt with food. As a creative writer, she did not want to be accused of copying any trends.

Jo's attitude towards her work is one of caution and meticulousness. That is why it took her 10 years to complete her novel. Meanwhile, she published the short story collections *The French Optician*, *My Purple Sofa*, and *Story of Gukja*, and



Writer Jo Kyung-ran in her studio

the essay collection *Jo Kyung-ran's Crocodile Story*. After *Tongue*, she published another short story collection, *I Bought a Balloon*, which won the prestigious Dong-in Literary Award.

I Bought a Balloon not only gifted her with a major literary award but also helped to pull her out of one of her intermittent periods of writer's block. After publishing *The Story of Gukja*, a period of gloom had descended upon her like an unexpected guest.

"I traveled a lot during that time. Maybe because my body was freed from my desk, I found it hard to sit down and work. A desk is like an extension of the writer's body, so that sense of detachment was very difficult for me. Likewise, the characters in my stories suffer because they are out of step with the world and can't interiorize anything. The task of overcoming that and getting in touch with your interior self was the subject of my collection, *I Bought a Balloon*. I felt like I was finally emerging from a long tunnel."

The darkness and depression that sought her was very much like the nights in which she works on her stories. Jo writes all of her stories in the middle of the night. It is a dramatically different lifestyle than those who work in an office every day. Even when she is not writing, she reads and thinks about things to write about, not turning in until six in the morning.

Jo spends the night in her studio, working on her fiction or reading, and returns home around one in the afternoon. When she gets home, her mother is there. Jo sits down to a meal prepared by her mother and begins another day. One could say

that the depression and writer's block that plagues her is the night, and the stars that appear against that dark backdrop are her stories. Her suffering and her creative work are a natural result, just as dawn comes when the night grows deepest, or how the stars shine brighter the darker it gets. Readers enjoy her books in exchange for her suffering, and they respond with sympathy. Jo has a particular ability to touch a nerve in her readers.

While in the United States, Jo Kyung-ran was asked the following question: "Who are you?" She was there to submit her first book when the publisher from Bloomsbury asked who she was. Jo was taken aback. Who am I? I am a writer, she thought. But since she was in the U.S. and not Korea, and because her work was not yet translated, American readers would not know who "Jo Kyung-ran" was. The publisher was not asking about her identity but rather where she fit within the U.S. Meaning, where did she fit within the American literary community?

Of course, it could have been a general question about her birthdate or hometown, nationality, work history, or literary activity. But she responded in a more sensitive way. Where do I fit within world literature? This question has become all the more real as her works are being translated and introduced around the world.

A forum on "Beyond Borders: Translating and Publishing Korean Literature in the U.S." was held in New York this fall, where Jo Kyung-ran spoke. Novelist Hwang Sok-yong and poet Kim Hyesoon were also there. Jo had planned to give a presentation on "Why do Korean writers need to be translated in America?" Perhaps it was her response to the American publisher's question, "who are you?" the first time she visited the U.S., as well as a statement about her identity as a writer.

Before her debut, Jo endured a very difficult time as a writer. She spent five years in a tiny room, reading and not going out. Like all people who have a lot of passion, Jo also underwent the agony of living with this kind of dreadful love. She attended college at a late age because she wanted to write poetry, and the more she wrote poetry, the more she realized that her true talents lay in fiction writing. Though she had dreamt of being a poet, she debuted as a novelist in keeping with her father's wishes. Then, while publishing a book a year, she came to know and love her readers.

Jo Kyung-ran gives off a youthful, vibrant energy. Her mind is always buzzing with stories of humanity and love, despair and suffering, and life and death. Yet loneliness lies at her core. In her next novel, that loneliness embraces the theme of death. She plans to set this next novel in Tokyo and Seoul. Publication is anticipated for May 2010.

"Even when I don't plan to, unexpected circumstances always push me to my limits," she said. "Isn't happiness what you feel when nothing bad has happened? Really good things cannot last forever. I think when something good happens, 11 minutes is all you need."

"I get nervous and start worrying about what will happen next. That's what writing is."

"When I turned 40 on December 31, 2008, I decided, 'I had better choose not to get married.'"

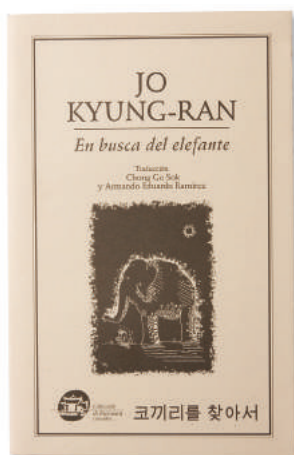
Simple answers to the questions of literature, experience,



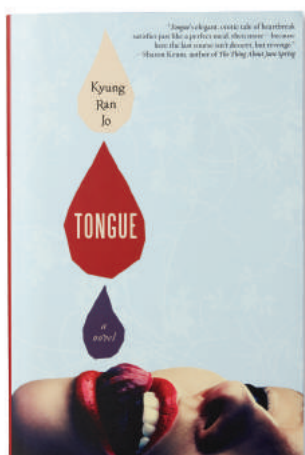
Writer Jo Kyung-ran and poet Whon Jaeheoun

happiness, writing, and marriage. Jo is both a caterpillar in a cocoon and a glorious butterfly. Perhaps even now she is tucked away in the perfect darkness of her studio with the blackout curtains drawn, reading a book at her desk or writing. No one is allowed to enter her room. Instead they await her well-sculpted creations. This is the message I wish to send to her. “Be well. Keep writing.”

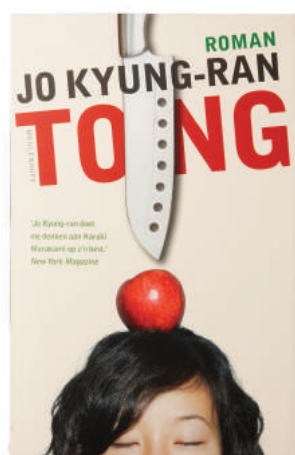
By Whon Jaeheoun
(poet)



In Search of an Elephant published in Spanish. (Ermitaño in Mexico)



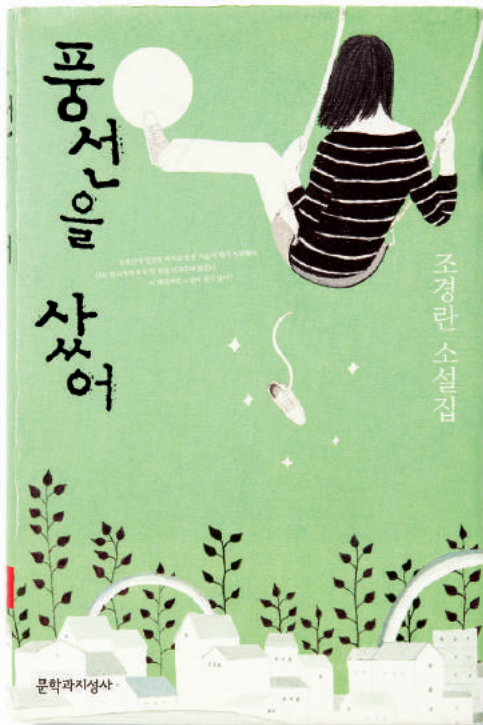
Tongue published in English. (Bloomsbury U.S.A.)



Tongue published in Dutch. (Meulenhoff in Netherlands)



Tongue
Jo Kyung-ran, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp., 2007, 352p
ISBN 978-89-546-0431-4



I Bought a Balloon

Jo Kyung-ran
Moonji Publishing Co., Ltd., 2008, 324p
ISBN 978-89-320-1869-0

The following excerpt is from the title story in Jo Kyung-ran's fifth short story collection, *I Bought a Balloon*.

The collection was awarded the Dong-in Literary Prize in 2008.

His therapeutic process didn't look smooth or easy. Working on a daily journal was one of the many chores he had as part of his therapy. If his doctor gave him an assignment to drive around downtown, he had to record when he did it, who he did it with, and what degree of anticipatory anxiety he would feel. And how he would get beyond his anxiety if panic overcame him. For his first assignment, which was to drive around downtown, he drove up to my house without any warning and picked me up, although, having just gotten up, I was wearing thick horn-rimmed glasses because I didn't have time to put in my contacts and had mismatched socks on my feet. It was one in the afternoon. Soon enough, it looked as if his heart was pounding, his neck was getting stiff, and he was beginning to breathe audibly. It didn't seem possible that he would be able to stay in his lane. I was twirling my hair with my index finger, playing with a balloon in my pocket. When we passed the congested Dosan intersection, he confessed that he had a feeling that an enormous cement truck would plow into us in any moment. I knew that his hands on the steering wheel were slick with sweat.

You know, I offered, you have to anticipate your fear and accept it. And you have to leave it alone as you acknowledge it, as you wait for it to pass. And you focus on what you can do right now. Then you have to acknowledge the progress you made by being one with your fear while you moved past it and you need to take this as an opportunity to practice not giving into the fear. And you have to know and accept that this fear

could come to you again. I quickly laid out all the ways to conquer fear, the sentences I used to think to myself at one point, with the word break-up in the place of fear. I joked, smiling ruefully, there are peaks and valleys to every learning experience, you know. No, I might have just sat there with my mouth firmly closed, as if I were angry, because I didn't know how to comfort someone.

When I'm at a loss as to what to do or if I encounter something difficult, I often wonder, what would Nietzsche do? Some things you have to learn at a young age, like knowing how to comfort someone or doing an act of kindness. I realized that I'd had almost no opportunity to practice things like that. To reassure him, I looked at him, my face stretched into the warmest smile I could muster. It was a good thing that he didn't say dismissively, Do you always cry so easily? Later, I saw that, in his daily journal, next to "How I will get out of an anxious state," he had written in large letters, "Ask a friend to drive instead."

Sitting in that car, I told J several things before I got out. J, you have the right to make mistakes and the right to ask for help and the right to feel anger and the right to cry and the right to be surprised and the right to change your mind, and, as long as you don't violate other people's rights, you have the right to do whatever it is that makes you happy, and the right to hate. And, I said, J, you have the right to drive.

I was glad that he seemed interested in what I was saying. Sometimes I think that I learned all the things I know not from Nietzsche, but from Thomas. My friend Thomas, who grew ferns,

had brunch at Café Louise at eleven on Sunday mornings, and always wore the fur coat that he had inherited from his mom. People didn't understand why he walked around wearing his dead mom's fur coat. I think we became so close because I understood that coat and Thomas understood my fears.

One day, Thomas told me, "Buy a balloon." That was one of the therapeutic methods recommended by Thomas, my friend and psychiatrist, who later became a neuropsychiatry specialist at Berlin's Charité Hospital. Every time I felt anxiety blooming, every time I sensed my breathing grow shallow, I controlled my breath by blowing up balloons, taking deep, rapid breaths. It was a breathing exercise to get me used to hyperventilation so that, even if I started breathing too rapidly, I wouldn't end up in a panic attack. Thomas would gaze at me blowing balloons, his green-gray eyes gloomy. They were the saddest and most anxious eyes that have ever looked at me. I blew up thousands of balloons.

Translated by Kim Chi-young



Drawing a New Korean Aesthetic

Cartoonist Kim Donghwa

Kim Donghwa is the cartoonist behind the exquisite stories that have made their way around the world, including Fairy Pink (1984), The Color of Earth (1995), and Red Bicycle (2003).

Manhwa critic and comic book enthusiast Seo Chan-hwe went in search of the man behind the comics.



from *The Color of Earth*

I met Kim Donghwa at his house cum studio located near Hongik University. Since last year, Kim has been busy as the face of Korean comics, presiding as the 24th President of the Korea Cartoonist Association. He also chairs the operating committee for the Bucheon International Comics Festival, and is co-chair of this year's committee for the 100th Anniversary of *Manhwa* (Korean comics). His many duties keep his days busy.

When I asked how he has been, Kim gave me an embarrassed grin and replied that his work with these organizations has kept him out of the studio more than expected. "An artist has to spend a lot of time at his desk in order to produce good work..." The sorrow of having to put aside artistic work in favor of putting in appearances showed in his face, but just as suddenly his "presidential" face reappeared, and our talk turned to three main topics.

First, to welcome the 100th anniversary of Korean comics and the 50th anniversary of early modern Korean comics, was the issue of improving the quality of Korean comic books

in order to overcome the limits that had been imposed by social pressure and state censorship. Second, we discussed the diversification of comic book readership, in order to encourage older people who look down on comics to instead become readers who appreciate the genre. Finally, the globalization of Korean comics concerns publishing them, by utilizing their existing strengths, including their strong human infrastructure, and adapting the comics to the respective culture of each foreign market. Kim feels that the time is ripe for promoting these issues, and says with a smile, "There is a crushing amount of work to be done, but Korean comic books must prevail. So I have no choice but to leave the studio to ensure that future for us."

However, these tasks are also Kim Donghwa's personal goals. Currently, all of his books are being published as finely-bound hardcovers that can be displayed on a shelf without looking cheap. He has also been creating comic books, like *Red Bicycle*, that can be read by adults as well as children, and generating a



Manhwa critic Seo Chan-hwe and cartoonist Kim Donghwa



wider readership. These works have been praised for breaking down the stereotypes of Asian comics that exist in other countries, particularly in Europe. He continues to agonize over his own brand, which is based on his own experiences, as well as the future of Korean comics in general. “When you meet people halfway, you create a reader,” he emphasizes.

Kim Donghwa is an artist who transforms himself constantly in order to tell the stories he wishes to tell. He was first known as a writer of romance comics for female readers, with such titles as *Our Story* (1970) and *Fairy Pink*. But at some point, he switched his focus to comics for young male readers, such as *Insect Boy* (1988) and *Run, Thunderboy, Run* (1990), which then led to the pursuit of a distinctly Korean aesthetic: *The Ugly* (1997), *The Color of Earth*, and *The Story of Kisaeng* (1996). He followed that up with yet another self-transformation by publishing comics like *Red Bicycle* that addressed universal emotions and themes, such as daily life in a country home and the lives of the older generation set in a country village.

Though he had stories to tell, it was not always easy to change his drawing style to match. He switched to boys’ comics in order to overcome the restrictions of romance comics, which demand only “pretty things.” Later, during a slump in his career, he was inspired by director Im Kwon-taek’s film *Seopyonje* (1993) and began pursuing a “Korean aesthetic.” After much research, he began drawing “shorter characters with slanted eyes and softer jawlines.” When he crossed back over to modern subjects, he adopted the cursive style of drawing that was popular in the 1970s—the same period in which the current older generation was the main consumers of comics. By changing his style to match his readers’ preferences, Kim’s work continued to evolve.

To draw women, Kim practiced with pencil drawings for



Korean Classic Short Stories Through Comics
Kim Donghwa, Sigongsa, 2001
ISBN 89-527-1277-3

six months in order to capture the beauty of the Korean eye. It took that long to overcome the strictures of the romance comic style, which is dominated by Western beauty ideals. When I asked him whether he doesn't simply enjoy changing his style, he shook his head. His response showed that the process of change is indeed never simple.

I asked Kim Donghwa what he, as the president of the Korea Cartoonist Association and as a comic book veteran, thought was the strong point of Korean comics. He responded, "If you think of it in terms of sports, it's like rugby." In other words, amidst the emotions of a society that had no choice but to be reckless in order to develop within a short period of time, many original works leapt forth, to everyone's surprise. Though state censorship during the periods of military dictatorship left much to be desired, he said, many innovative works such as webtoons have been emerging recently as this pressure has been reduced.

"We've overcome countless invasions by foreign powers and survived Japanese colonization, the Korean war, and modernization. Those are dramatic turns not seen in many other countries. We are a country that endured a difficult history, and that has racial aspects other people have not experienced. Yet we've risen to 10th place in the world. I think that Korean comics have the power to unravel these different subjects and diverse stories, and I think we have the strength to sublimate that pain into art. I have faith in us."

Kim Donghwa, who has published many works abroad, is currently working on a 70-page comic, tentatively titled *The Boy and the Soldier*, which is scheduled for publication by Casterman, a publisher of Franco-Belgian comics. The story is about a Korean boy who meets a French soldier during the Korean War. Kim says that half of the story will be told at the time of the Korean War, while the other half will take place 50 years in the future, when the boy meets the soldier's wife in France.

Kim also says that he would like to write a comic book based on his granddaughter, as he has recently become a grandfather himself. He plans to title it *Habi*, which is baby talk for *harabeoji*, "grandfather" in Korean. He said that he was so overwhelmed by how sweet and adorable his granddaughter was that his mind naturally turned to the idea of creating a comic book. "There must be tons of 'beginner grandpas' like me in the world," he said with a laugh. "The story would be about a beginner grandpa taking his granddaughter out for a special date or that sort of thing, and there would probably be some stories about the family and people in the neighborhood."

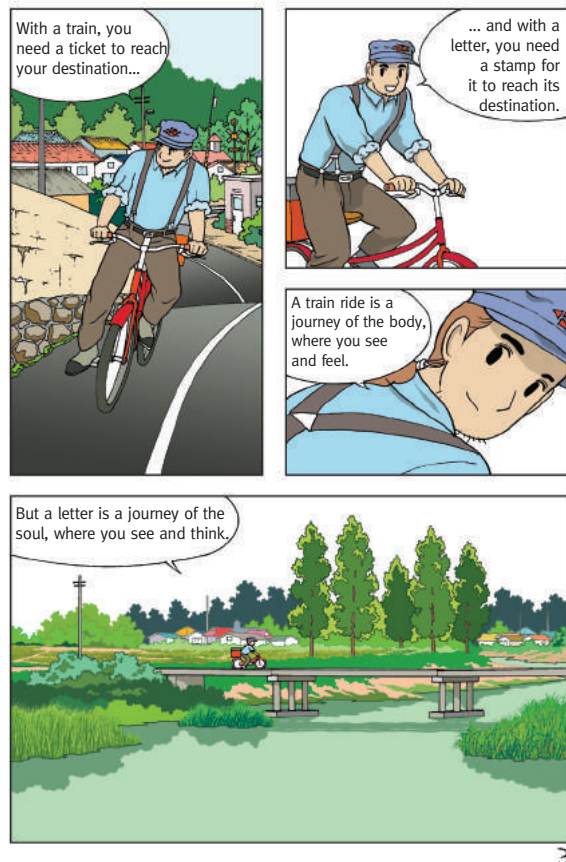
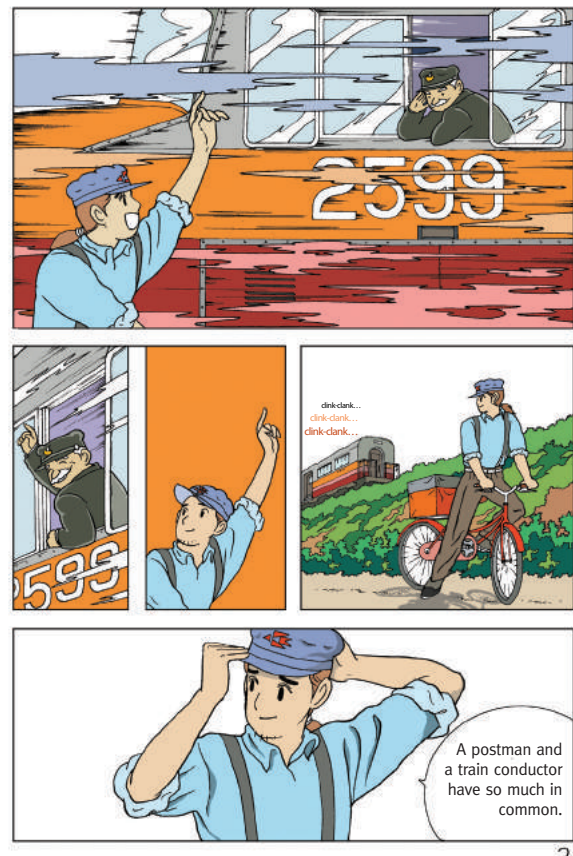
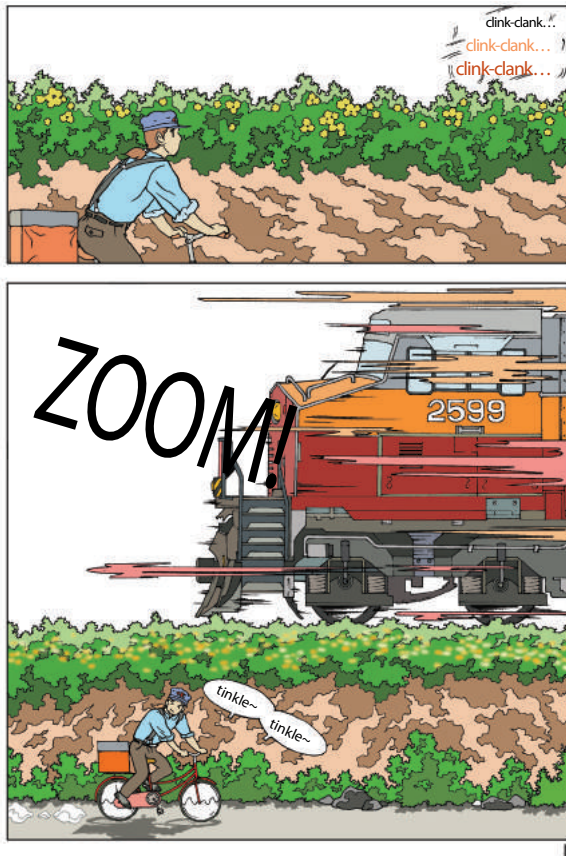
Kim Donghwa believes in diversifying his readership and the subjects he writes about to appeal not only to readers around the world but also to entertain older readers in the 60 to 70 year age group. With his stylish red checkered pants, long ponytail, and eyes that tear at the thought of his mother who has always been one of his strongest influences, Kim is constantly working and moving forward as the face of Korean comics. I wish him well on the road ahead.

By Seo Chan-hwe
(manhwa critic)



1. *The Story of Kisaeng* published in French.
(*Histoires de Kisaeng*, Paquet)
2. *The Color of Earth* published in French.
(*Histoire Couleur Terre*, Casterman)

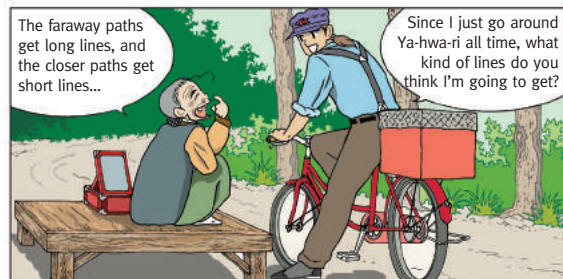
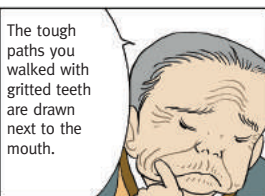
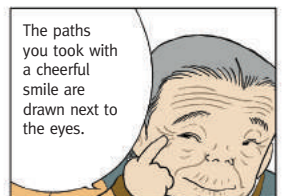
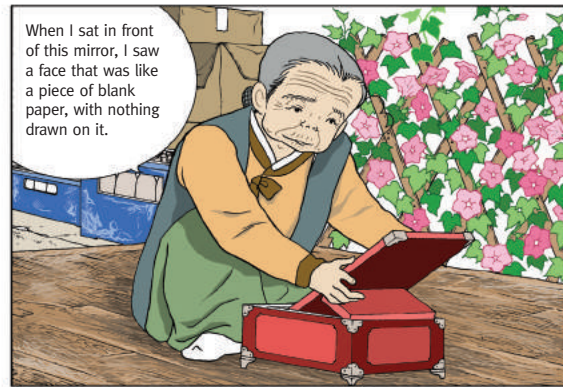
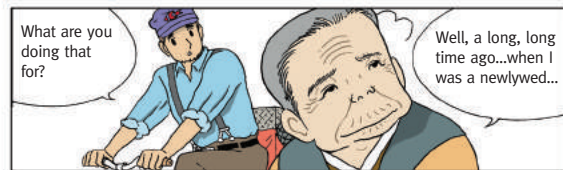
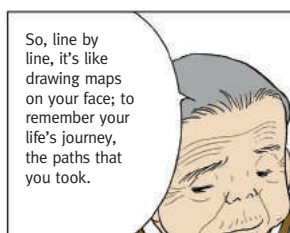
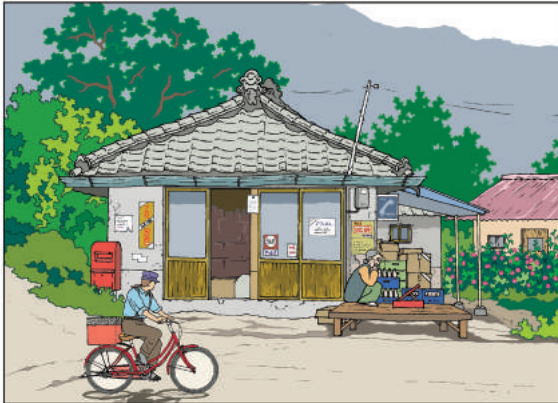
Story #23 The Postman and the Train Conductor



Red Bicycle

Story #18 Wrinkles

Kim Dong Hwa, Yolimwon Publishing Co., 2009, ISBN 978-89-953485-0-5 (set)



Translated by Kim Cheewan 4 END



Interview with Drenka Willen

Senior Editor of Harcourt/ Houghton Mifflin

A Few Words with an Icon

Journalist Kim Meekyung discussed editing and politics with the U.S. editor Drenka Willen who was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2009 London Book Fair.

“Line-editing.” When I asked her, “Which aspect of publishing do you find most rewarding?” that was her answer: line-editing. Drenka Willen, the famous senior editor of Harcourt/ Houghton Mifflin, is one of the most influential editors in the U.S. I was a little shocked because I had expected an answer more profound. When I visited her office, I asked her again. “What does ‘line-editing’ mean?” She showed me a bundle of thick white papers on which all the print was written double-spaced. She slowly began to point and touch the letters. “This is line-editing. When I get the first translated draft, I always read these sentences very, very slowly and carefully with my fingers like this. I carefully reexamine, feel and check whether the translated meaning is fine or not.” Line-editing. This detailed process that many people think could be done by a proofreader was her favorite work. It tells us how detailed she is. It symbolizes why every author wants to work with her. She gave me only simple and short answers. There was no exaggeration. She didn’t tell me anything elaborate, but all the answers she gave me were powerful, and echoed of a quiet yet commanding presence that has been a publishing force for over 40 years.

Kim Meekyung: You are well known, and have worked with four of the Nobel Laureates in Literature from the past dozen years. Who are they?

Drenka Willen: Günter Grass (1999), José Saramago(1998), Wisława Szymborska (1996), and Octavio Paz (1990).



Harcourt / Houghton Mifflin

© Cha Seungghun



Harcourt / Houghton Mifflin published Kim Young-ha's novel, *I Have the Right to Destroy Myself*.

KM: Because you have edited many Nobel Laureates in Literature, I'm sure you have read widely in the literature of many other countries. Does this wide reading and editing experience give you a sense of the differences in the literature of the world?

DW: Yes.

KM: Is there any secret know-how that makes it possible for you to continually publish all the books of the Nobel Laureates in Literature?

DW: Maintaining deep relationships with the authors is one of the most important things. I always try to stay with them as long as possible. Sometimes, I travel to the author's hometown to understand the context of the works. I keep in good touch with them. I carefully read their works and give them my sincere opinion.

KM: Do you have a special sense of what kinds of literature are worthy of the Nobel Prize? Do you feel that you can discern which authors might be worthy of this honor?

DW: It is often a surprise to me, and to everyone, but of course there are the shortlists of preeminent world authors. I am in touch with translators, professors, readers, and writers. From them, I get all kinds of information and think about them.

KM: In Korea, there are many extraordinary novelists and poets, but as of now Korean writers have not found a large international audience. The fact that Korean is not a major world language may be part of this problem. Also, not much Korean literature has been translated into English. What is your view of this? Do you think that my analysis is correct, and if so, what would you see as a possible solution to getting more Korean literature to a wider, world audience?

DW: I am not familiar with Korean literature, unfortunately. But I am sure there is Korean literature worth translating, there always is. Please introduce me to many Korean writers. You can give me lots of information. (When I showed her Ko Un and Hwang Sok-yong's translated books in English, she showed lots of interest. Particularly, she was interested in Ko Un's book of poetry. She exclaimed, "It's gorgeous! It's beautiful!") One of the problems may be a lack of translators, or perhaps editors don't know about the literary translators that are in fact available. Translators can be very good advocates for books.

KM: You are emphasizing the importance of the translators. How can you find good translators?

DW: It's so important. It takes too long to become a good translator. It's such delicate, such difficult work. For example, there are no translators who can translate every masterpiece. Even though she or he is a fantastic translator, they can't translate every work. For a special book, a special translator is needed. The translator's entire career and language ability should be suitable to translate the special work. The most difficult thing to figure out is who is the most perfect to do the work. When I try to find a suitable translator, I usually ask them to send us 25 to 30 pages of their translated draft. After reading very carefully, I make a decision about the translator.

KM: Can you explain to me how you choose the books which you will translate and publish? Do you have special

standards or requirements?

DW: We look for works of literature exceptional in their own countries. If one is going to go to the trouble of translating a book, it should be the best.

KM: Can you please tell me what percentage of books published by Harcourt/ Houghton Mifflin are translations from another language?

DW: Around 12 percent.

KM: Most publishing companies focus on “front” books for more profit, so they usually focus on publishing books by popular authors. This leads to the “rich get richer, poor get poorer” result in publishing. What is your opinion of this phenomenon? Does this practice limit the number of books published in this country from authors in foreign countries?

DW: In terms of the number of translations published in the United States, in every issue of *Publishers Weekly*, there are at least three or four translated books. This seems like a good sign to me.

KM: What kinds of books are bestsellers in America? What is the percentage breakdown between fiction and non-fiction bestsellers?

DW: This is hard to answer; some high-quality books are bestsellers.

KM: Are you happy and satisfied with your work as an editor?

DW: I am. I enjoy my work.

KM: You were born and raised in Croatia. Are you fluent in the Croatian language? Do you view Croatia as your motherland, or do you think of yourself as an American, or as a cosmopolitan?

DW: Yes, I am fluent in Serbo-Croatian. I think of myself as a cosmopolitan.

I asked her “In your life, what is the most important thing among your work, your love, relationships?” She answered “My children.”

“Are you using the e-book reader, Kindle?” was my last question. She answered, no, she doesn't use Kindle. But she did admit that it would be useful for travelers and younger audiences. She was not sure whether it could be more popular or not than books. She admits the importance of the digitalization of books, but she also admitted the importance of books, too.

“In the future? Anyway, books always will be,” was her last answer.

By Kim Meekyung
(journalist)

Drenka Willen's Profile

She was born in a Croatian town near Zagreb.

She was linguistically talented and went on to Birmingham University. She married an American from New York, and began her career at Harcourt in 1962, translating and editing the work of Yugoslav writer Milovan Djilas.

Willen has edited four of the Nobel Laureates from the 1990s:

Octavio Paz, Wislawa Szymborska, Günter Grass, and José Saramago.

She has won the 1998 PEN/Roger Klein Editorial Award, given to a trade book editor every two years for “distinguished editorial achievement.”

She received the London Book Fair's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009.

The chair of the London Book Fair's advisory board said:

“Drenka Willen has for 40 years inspired respect and admiration amongst her peers across the globe, from authors to agents to publishers. Her dedication to discovering and championing foreign authors, including four Nobel Prize winners, which must be something of a record, marks her out as a worthy recipient.”



Drenka Willen and Kim Meekyung

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Sapporo Inn Blurring the Line Between Dream and Reality

Sapporo Inn

Ha Seong-nan, translated by Xu Lianshun
Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, 2009

Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House is a publisher with a 50 year history, and an expertise in literature and art. For the most part it publishes contemporary literature from home and abroad, specializing in art, literary theory, and art and literary criticism. Using know-how and strength, they have enhanced their quality, marketability, and creativity to establish a brand with national influence. Their published works include novels such as *A Dictionary of Maqiao*, *Brothers*, and *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, as well as academic books such as *Yizhongtian Comments on the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Such books have given readers the impression that books

published by Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House are critical in order to understand the contemporary art and literature of China. For its part, the publishing house is expanding efforts to establish itself as the greatest publisher of novels in China by also focusing on the translation and publication of literature from abroad.

Recently, an increasing number of publishers in China have been translating and publishing works of Korean literature. Popular writers such as Kim Hain and Guiyeoni are widely recognized in China, and major writers of Korea, such as Choi In-ho, Eun Hee-kyung, and Pak Wansuh are gaining a wider readership as well. Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House is closely watching outstanding Korean novelists whose works possess both literary merit and a unique worldview; one such writer is Ha Seong-nan.

Ha, who stands out among the new writers of Korea, is reputed for her subtle and original style, described as “micro depiction.” With a clever imagination and a strong sense of reality, she won the spring literary award held by *The Seoul Shinmun*, the Dong-in Literary Award, The Hankook Ilbo Literary Award, and the Isu Literary Award, among others. Thus, the Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House has made the decision to translate and publish *Sapporo Inn*, Ha’s most famous work.

Yi Seon-myeong and Yi Jin-myeong, the protagonists, are twin brother and sister. Seon-myeong, the younger brother, dies from a traffic accident, and his body, with the exception of his left ear, which disappeared, is cremated. Ever since the cremation, Jin-myeong, the other twin, keeps hearing a mumbling sound in her left ear, saying in Japanese, “*Watashi-no namae-wa Koske-desu* (My name is Koske).” The voice seems to be calling out to her brother. When she finds out that her brother had bought four miniature bells, she sets out on a journey spanning 10 years, a journey akin to a treasure hunt.

In the novel, the four bells and Koske—a man in Sapporo—seem to be a kind of metaphor. Out of a longing for her deceased brother, Jin-myeong sets out on a persistent search, even if it will come to nothing, and ends up in smoke. In the process of her quest, Jin-myeong gets mixed up in all kinds of mishaps, through which she comes to experience the vicissitudes of life, and meets different people. The subtle emotions she feels, both dreamlike and realistic, make up for a vital piece in the puzzle that is her growth and life. The descriptions, as natural as a flowing stream yet elaborately formed, break down the barriers between life and death, existence and nonexistence, and good and evil. The writer leads the reader not to despair, but to think for themselves. Such barriers are not immune to destruction.

Sapporo Inn is an outstanding work that joins together ideology, art, and readability. Through this work, readers will come to reflect on the meaning of life and existence.

By Cao Qing
(editor of Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House)



The Rainy Spell Korean Literature Enters the Swedish Scene

Regnperioden

Yun Heung-gil, translated by Ahruyn Gustafsson; Leif Gustafsson
Bokförlaget Tranan, 2009

Translated fiction constitutes a major part of Swedish publishing, almost as large as Swedish fiction itself. Out of some 3,000 titles of prose and poetry published every year, translated fiction comprises some 25 percent, thus making up a substantial and very important part of the Swedish literary scene. This is a scene heavily dominated by literature from the U.S. and U.K., with some 75 percent of all translated fiction coming from these two countries. During the last few decades the tendency towards translating Anglo-Saxon literature has increased. Literature from the continental languages such as German, French, and Spanish has, on the other hand, decreased. These languages only represent a small percentage of all translations. And the rest of the world,

including Korea, is only represented by a fraction of a percent. Some four-fifths of the world's population and their literature are barely present in the Swedish literary market. While there is much talk about globalization, and with an increase in border crossings of all kinds, we are witnessing the opposite when it comes to literature as its becoming more provincial.

Tranan Publishing House was founded in order to introduce literature from the world. Reading from the whole world is our motto. We issued our first book in 1992, and have since then published some 160 titles. We specialize in translated fiction and poetry from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, but we also publish literature from other language areas neglected in the Swedish book market such as German, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Among our flagship projects is the storytelling series, in which new, interesting short stories from all parts of the world are presented for the Swedish audience. So far 15 countries have been represented, including Germany, Poland, China, Vietnam, and South Africa.

In 2006, Trasten was created as an imprint for children's literature. Against this backdrop we are indeed pleased, and proud to have published three Korean literary works (two by Yi Mun-yol and one by Yun Heung-gil), and one children's book, *World Within the Map* by Choi Sukhee and Kim Hyangeum. Apart from that there are only a handful of Korean literature titles (among them poetry by Ko Un) published in Swedish. This fact raises some serious concerns about our country's chances to better know the Korean people, their history, culture, and their art of writing. It is our ambition to pursue as soon as possible our publishing of Korean literature.

Let me say a few words about the latest Korean book we have published, three short stories by Yun Heung-gil: "The Rainy Spell" (*Regnperioden*), "Sailing Without A Mast" (*Vind för våg*), and "Firewood" (*Bränslebrist*). I do not think it is necessary to introduce a writer who is one of Korea's best-known authors. But we are indeed very pleased and proud to have published this fine and important work. These stories bring us back to the traumatic civil war. After the cease-fire, a new generation of Korean writers made their debuts, bringing modern and realistic writing onto the scene. The three stories we have published center on the war experiences and its deep effects on Korean society, and we may add, even on world politics.

In the first story "The Rainy Spell" (*Regnperioden*), we are placed in the midst of the ongoing war, and the writer creates in a strong and convincing way a work of literature with all the extreme conflicts affecting individuals, families, and society. Still everyday life must go on. Yun Heung-gil manages to convince us how life may endure in spite of deep divisions and conflicts. In the other two stories, the writer brings us into the aftermath of the war—how people have to fight to survive, and how the foreign troops show little respect for Korean values and culture. Heung-gil is a great writer giving us these insights into modern Korea, and with a language and character development only found in high literature.

By Styrbjörn Gustafsson
(publisher of Tranan Publishing House)



The Power of Caring Appreciating the Small Things in Life

*Han Sangbok's novel, **The Power of Caring**, first published in China, has now been published in Thailand. This book that found a large audience in Korea emphasizes that one must be attentive to the large and the small.*

The Power of Caring

Han Sangbok, translated by Soontree Larproongruang
Nanmeebooks Publications Co., Ltd., 2009

The Power of Caring was a bestseller in Korea with 200,000 copies sold in 2006. With the success of the adult edition, the children's edition came out soon after. Both editions have already been translated in Chinese, and a Thai translation has also been slated. These books enhance the sense of "caring" in all of us. If we start to care for the people in our family or the work place, it will not only bring happiness to our own family, but to the world.

While caring is the main theme that both the adult and children's editions have in common, it is presented in different contexts. *The Power of Caring* (adult edition) is the story of Vee, a man who never cares about anything in his life. This finally leads him to trouble. His ignorance on every level causes problems at work and in his marriage, which is slowly deteriorating. Vee seems to be alone in a dark room without an exit when he meets a man who lights up his life and shows him a way out. Han Sangbok clearly demonstrates that every crisis has a solution, and we can overcome it simply by paying attention to every little thing around us.

The Power of Caring (children's edition) is the story of Neya, Vee's daughter. Neya is a good girl, a top-ranked student with a strong sense of responsibility, who is, however, unhappy. She has no friends and her parents seem to neglect her. Her life significantly changes when she joins the "Happy Heart Club." There she learns to care about people and things, even the tiniest thing around her. The result of this change affects her life more than she ever imagined. Han Sangbok shows us the importance and power of caring, because everything around us, even the smallest things affect us in some way. When we treat these seemingly inconsequential things with care, something

good will eventually be returned to us.

Readers have said that this book has not only been beautifully designed, but the content has also been given painstaking attention. It shows readers the importance of the small things in life. In addition, this book is fitting as a gift on special occasions such as birthdays or New Year's for friends and loved ones.

With Nanmeebooks' mission to improve the quality of life of the Thai public through books, as well as promote literacy and the joy of reading in both Thai children and adults, we believe that *The Power of Caring* will develop a sense of caring and love among us.

Nanmeebooks was founded in September 1992 by Suwadee Chongsatitwatana and we are one of the largest publishers in Thailand. We publish high quality adult and children's fiction and nonfiction from all over the world, including Korea. Our adult list features bestselling authors such as Isabel Allende, Bill Clinton, Paulo Coelho, Patricia Cornwell, Michael Crichton, Catherine Graham, John Grisham, Dr. Spencer Johnson, and Tom Peters, and we are proud and honored to publish the work of HRH Princess Sirindhorn, as well as various Nobel Prize winning works of literature.

Our children's list features bestselling authors including J.K. Rowling, Cornelia Funke, K.A. Applegate, Enid Blyton, *The Horrible Series*' Terry Deary, *Doraemon*'s Fujiko F. Fujio, Darren Shan, Lemony Snicket, and Jacqueline Wilson. For more information, please visit our website www.nanmeebooks.com.

By Sutep Prommongkol
(editor of Nanmeebooks)

Writer's Note

Books Warming Up Wintry Nights in Sweden



The most difficult part of getting ready for a trip is choosing which books to take. What kind of books, and how many? It's always a dilemma. I've heard of someone who takes seven books on a week-long trip, and 30 on a month-long trip. I can see why. I wouldn't feel at ease without that many, at least. Not having books to read on the train, or at the airport during a flight delay—just thinking about it makes me feel bored. I, too, was like that person. From Dostoevsky to Nick Hornby, I had to stuff my bags with all kinds of books that fit all kinds of situations in order to feel at ease.

In October 2008, I left for Sweden as a participant in the Overseas Residency Programs for Korean Writers hosted by the Korean Literature Translation Institute. The stay was to last three months. How many books should I take? I thought. Thirty? A hundred? I couldn't decide, for the life of me. I couldn't really grasp how long the three months would actually feel, and what kind of a life I would be living there. In the end, after mulling it over for a long time, I put only one book in my bag. It wasn't something special that I had to read. Neither was it the most important book in my life.

What I had in mind was to free myself from books for a while, albeit for three months only. I thought I should see the city instead of reading books, and focus on the weather and the atmosphere of the newly encountered city, instead of obsessing over letters. I thought a single volume to read on the plane would suffice. And I thought, if I get a pressing urge to read a book, I'll just write one. I read half of the book on the plane, and finished it a few days after my arrival. For the first month, I got by all right. Since I had to adjust to a new life, I read more newspapers and signs and maps than I read books. There was a big lake in front of the building where I was staying. Every morning, people ran along the lakeside. I followed suit, and went running as well. I went to the market where everyone in town gathered together, and bought bread and prosciutto, milk, and vegetables for breakfast. Around two in the afternoon, people gathered in sunny areas to bathe in the sun. I went sunbathing as well. The dogs did, too. If you've spent a winter in Sweden, you know how briefly the sun shines. Evenings were difficult. After a month and a half, I couldn't get any work done, for I longed to read something. I had thought that I could write something myself if I wanted to read, but that wasn't the case. I wanted to read, but I wanted to read someone else's thoughts. I felt lonely when I couldn't.

With the help of an acquaintance, I made my way over to the International Library. There was a section of books from Korea. The Korean books, perhaps 100 volumes altogether, took up about two shelves. Most of them were well-known, and I had read the majority of them. I borrowed both volumes one and two of *The Song of the Sword*. The Korean words, read underneath a blanket in a cold winter in Sweden, were sweet, so sweet that I resented how they melted and melted away. From time to time, I looked out the window, and saw that many windows were lit. The people of Sweden, like myself, were reading something on the long, long winter night, I thought. They were reading something, licking the sweet sentences that kept melting away under the dim light, and playing the story over and over again in their minds. If someone would read the stories I wrote in such a way, nothing would make me happier, I thought. If someone read my words on a long winter night, covered in a blanket, laughing and crying, feeling anxious, then again relieved, how happy I would be. How happy I would be if someone who felt lonely was healed in this way. Looking at the countless windows outside my window that wintry night in Sweden, I felt happy to be a writer.

By Kim Jung-hyuk

Kim Jung-hyuk made his literary debut in 2000 with "Penguin News." His major works include *Penguin News*, a collection of short stories, and *The Library of Musical Instruments*. In 2008, he received the Kim You-jeong Literary Award with the short story, "Syncopation D."



Hongdae

Book Cafes, Publishing Houses, and Coffee Streets

*Every fall, the streets of Hongdae fill with books.
Hundreds of publishers make use of Hongdae's popular alleyways to host
diverse events and sell their books directly at a reduced price.
Book festivals are a natural fit for this neighborhood.*



1. Jageopsil (Studio) 2. Seoul Wowbook Festival's wow book market
3. Geurimchaek Sangsang (Picturebooks Store & Café Imagination)



1. *Today's Coffee, Vol. 1 & 2*
Kisun, *Today's Coffee*, anibooks
2009, 187p, ISBN 978-89-5919-245-8



2. *Cafes Speak To Me*
Kim Huk, *Book Studio Maho*
2009, 216p, ISBN 978-89-961500-1-5

Many young Koreans make a beeline for Hongdae. The charming streets are lined with clubs, and a flea market is held every weekend. But more than that, Hongdae's popularity is due to its many unique cafes. *Saju* (four pillars of destiny) cafes where you can have your fortune read, pet cafes where you can take your dog, dentist cafes where you can have your teeth checked, gallery cafes where you can appreciate art—the list goes on! But among these many colorful cafes, the most prominent are the book cafes. Cafes with anywhere from dozens to thousands of books await customers. And the book titles run the gamut. Some cafes specialize in photography books, while others collect only foreign books. Of course, some provide many books regardless of genre so that customers may take their pick. One cafe even gives a free cup of coffee to customers who donate their own used books.

The extraordinary number of cafes, and especially book cafes, is due to Hongdae's distinctively artistic vibe. The name Hongdae was originally an abbreviation of Hongik University (*Hongik Daehakkyo*), which is famous for its fine arts program. The university has left its artistic stamp on the surrounding area, lending it a strong artistic vigor of its own. Beginning with painters, artists in various fields first began to gather here, eventually drawing crowds of people to the area. Now, Hongdae has become a proper name in its own right, referring to the neighborhood in front of Hongik University. Every weekend, young people can be found strolling the streets of Hongdae, popping into charming book cafes, drinking coffee, perusing books, and chatting with each other.



1,3. Geurimchaek Sangsang (Picturebooks Store & Café Imagination) 2. Jageopsil (Studio) 4,8,9. Toy
5. Changbakkeul Bwa Barami Bulgo Iseo Haruneun Bukjigoseo Haruneun Seojigoseo (Look Outside the Window, The wind is Blowing, One Day From the North, One Day From the West)
6. Iri (Yiri Café) 7. Tokkiui Jihye (Wisdom Rabbit)

In addition to book cafes, Hongdae is also home to many publishing houses. It would be no exaggeration to say that fully half of all Korean publishers are located in Hongdae. There is also active exchange between book cafes and publishers. When a new book comes out, publishers promote them to book cafes, and book signings and book release parties are frequently held in cafes as well. Every autumn, Hongdae's "parking street" is rented out for the Seoul Wow Book Festival. There, hundreds of publishers gather to sell their books directly at reduced prices, and many different events are held.

For busy urbanites, sipping coffee and reading a book in a cafe is one of life's small pleasures. Owning their own small cafe is also a dream for many young Koreans in their 20s and 30s. Of course, for most, this dream is just a fantasy, like stretching out with a glass of beer beneath a palm tree to take a nap. But as more cafes open in Hongdae, it is clear that more people are finding the courage to pursue that dream. The exploding interest in coffee is also due to the popularity of the TV show *Coffee Prince*, which first aired a few years ago. It is not surprising then that book cafes have many books related to coffee and cafes. Books on coffee, books on cafes both inside and outside Korea, informational books on opening cafes—the publication of such titles continues, reflecting the popularity of Hongdae's book cafes. Below is a list of recommended books on

cafes. They offer a glimpse into young Koreans' fascination with cafes and Hongdae's cafe culture.

Today's Coffee, Vol. 1 & 2

The comic book *Today's Coffee* is a friendly primer on all things coffee, geared towards young women in their 20s who are the primary patrons of cafes. Set in a fictional cafe in Hongdae, the comic book includes everything from funny episodes and love stories, to information about coffee. Readers learn the basics about coffee while enjoying cute drawings and sweet stories.

A Cafe for Every Day

A Cafe for Every Day is a collection of the writer's newspaper columns extolling his love of cafes. His straightforward writing style and cafe stories offer a glimpse of the true charm of Hongdae's cafes. The author includes a listing of contact information for all of the cafes mentioned in the book.

Cafes Speak To Me

Cafe owners are an important part of the attraction of Hongdae cafes. They come from many different occupations. As lovers of the arts, as well as coffee, they manage their cafes as places for communication. As the owners' personalities define the cafes'



personalities, this book is a collection of interviews with cafe owners. Their thoughts on cafes and on their business philosophy expressed in their interviews help to lift the veil on Hongdae's enigmatic cafes.

The Romantic Job

This is the story of the difficulties one ordinary man faced while starting his own cafe. Told through a series of essays, the book explains the thoughts of young people who love cafes.

*Hongdae's book cafes can be easily reached by subway. Hongik University Station and Hapjeong Station on line 2, and Sangsu Station on line 6 all serve the area. Most of the cafes are located within the triangle formed by these three stations.

By Cho Han-woong
(copywriter, author)



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2

1. *The Romantic Job*

Cho Han-woong, Maumsanchack
2009, 232p, ISBN 978-89-6090-032-5

2. *A Cafe for Every Day*

Yi Myung-suk, Hyohyeung Publishing Co.
2009, 315p, ISBN 978-89-5872-075-1

Books on Healing

Alone in a Corner with a Little Book

Books on healing and recovery are climbing the bestseller charts. These diverse titles include essays by people who have pulled themselves up from despair, stories about finding mental space in our busy lives, meditations on awakening the inner self, tales of recovery through psychology, and other recommended reading on the subject of healing.

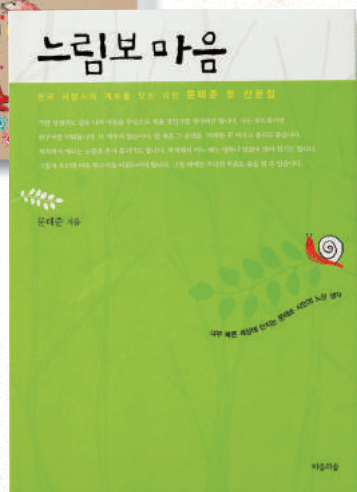
You are gripped by an inexplicable anxiety. Your job is in peril, and your marriage is on the rocks. Raising children is not going the way you would like it to. We all share the same anxieties, yet there is nowhere we can turn, and nowhere to rest our minds. It is no coincidence, then, that therapeutic books on healing and recovery have been flying off the shelves.

Weight Training for the Heart: *One Very Light Feather*

In *One Very Light Feather*, the author Gong Ji-young pledges to throw off the two incurable diseases that have plagued humankind for the longest time—"yesterday-itis" and "tomorrow-itis"—and resolves to live happily. Gong's many acquaintances appear in the book: "Hoarding Deadwood," a poet who lives in Mt. Jiri, advises a friend to sing children's songs on the way to Nogodan Peak, and "Chinese Minnow," a poet who, after being held up on the street by a burglar, says that he doesn't have cash so the burglar can withdraw cash from a machine. There is the painter friend who advises her to love again, saying that there can be no joy in life without a little pain. And there are the writer's children, who are gradually learning about the world. The author confesses that she is "always thankful, and that she has received more than she has given" to her many friends and acquaintances. What she has realized as she has grown older, she says, is that it is the little things, our light-as-feather days, that collect and form our lives, and give us life. The big things that we cling to in our youth are in fact small and trivial. Grand themes such as human history, the earth, the environment, and politics, are experienced in the minute, such as a single blade of grass, a persimmon tree, filing taxes, and the many small dishes that are eaten with rice. The writer quietly reveals the muscles of her heart that have been trained through enduring days of crisis, and sings of healing and recovery of the self from a life of desperation.



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1. *One Very Light Feather*

Gong Ji-young, Hankyoreh Publishing Company
2009, 252p, ISBN 978-89-8431-317-0

2. *Slow of Heart*

Moon Taejun, Woods of Mind's Books
2009, 264p, ISBN 978-89-9278-319-4

Resting for a Beat: *Slow of Heart*

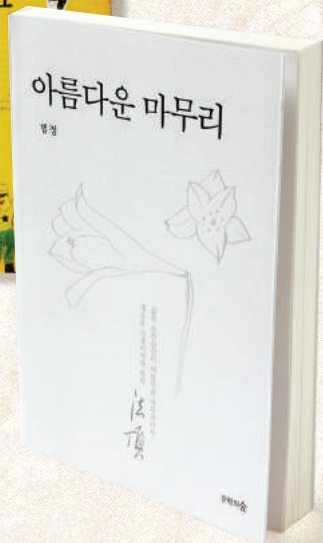
Poet Moon Taejun's first prose collection, *Slow of Heart*, goes against the modern virtue of speed to preach the aesthetics of slowness, offering comfort to readers' hearts. The poet asks, "In this rapidly spinning world, does your heart have time to breathe?" Just as the secret to longevity is eating less, so the heart too could use some lightening up. "If you talk less, you make fewer mistakes," the poet reasons. As he smiles at his baby's first milk teeth or rejoices at a sparrow that has returned after three years, the poet's words are clear and unadorned. The scent of his hometown, memories of his father, the landscape of his youth—the poet's stories are just right for giving our busy minds a breather. The poet, who says that we must build a pure, clean room in our hearts where we can rest, offers words of wisdom to busy urbanites living in these complicated times.

Therapy Through Thankfulness and Joy: *Thank You, My Untidy Life*

Thank You, My Untidy Life is a declaration of gratitude and happiness from the students of Suseonjae Meditation School. An elderly



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3. *Thank You, My Untidy Life*
Park Eunki, Suseonjae, 2009, 240p
ISBN 978-89-89150-57-2

4. *Beautiful Finish*
Beopjeong, The Forest of Literature, 2005, 244p
ISBN 978-89-959049-6-1



5

5. *The Psychology of Healing Through Film*
Kim Joonki, Sigma Books, 2009, 320p
ISBN 978-89-8445-362-3

6. *Hey, Call Me When You're Down!*
Kim Soo-mi, Samtoh Co., Ltd., 2009, 284p
ISBN 978-89-464-1753-3



6

man living alone after being abandoned by his foster child; a young man in his 20s who lost his mother to suicide and was mistreated by his stepmother; a pianist reborn through ovarian cancer as a meditative painter: the laughter, tears, and words of gratitude of the ordinary people in our everyday lives are messages of comfort and healing to those who harbor hidden wounds deep within their hearts. The world is full of injustice. But when we look at the world through a lens of gratitude, we realize that, just as the writers say, there has been a universal providence quietly directing the world all this time. For the writers of

Thank You, My Untidy Life, what was thought of as suffering becomes nutrients for growth; pain is the property of the senses, love is healing, and recovery is a retrieval of the heart's true function.

The Healing Power of a Humble Life: *Beautiful Finish*

In *Beautiful Finish*, Monk Beopjeong says, "Life must be a series of beautiful finishes and fresh starts." Monk Beopjeong, who follows his discussion of non-possession with the topic of beautiful finish, says, "A beautiful finish is a return to the original mind." The root of recovering one's lost purpose must be accompanied by the question of "Who am I?" Finish is achieved moment by moment, when one returns repeatedly to this question. Also, internal healing arises alongside finishing. Monk Beopjeong says that making humility

a part of our everyday lives helps to return us to our original place in the world. Setting aside worldly successes and failures in pursuit of our own pure existence and arriving at a world where nothingness fulfills us, that is a beautiful finish. Monk Beopjeong writes, "A person seeking enlightenment must be awakened anew over and over until they reach life's final stop." Inner enlightenment experienced again and again—that is the power that drives our individual healing and recovery.

Celluloid Cure: *The Psychology of Healing Through Film*

The Psychology of Healing Through Film introduces 24 movies that explore the theme of trauma, ranging from the personal to the social. The author, a psychiatry specialist, expands the category of injury and healing while combining clinical cases and various types of traumas from his own professional experience. In addition to *Secret Sunshine*, which has been analyzed from various angles, the author also examines such movies as *21 Grams*, *Mystic River*, *Forest Gump*, and *Maundy Thursday* to show how the external psychological traumas that surface after experiencing a physical or psychological shock can turn into common illnesses that afflict many people. The author asserts that trauma, which until recently was seen as a taboo and a kind of mental disorder, is a product of the rapid development of a modern technological civilization and the era of unlimited competition that stresses change. He emphasizes the need for public discussion of trauma as a product of modern



7

7. *Psychology of City Life*
Ha Jeehyun, Hainaim Publishing Co., Ltd.
2009, 238p, ISBN 978-89-7337-024-5



8

8. *An Ailing Soul Turns a Page*
Kim Young-a, Samin Books, 2009, 260p
ISBN 978-89-91097-94-0

society. Following careful analysis of each movie, the author stresses the importance of communication and positive thinking, because there is no better remedy than the mutual sympathy found in the relationship between the characters of *Maundy Thursday*.

Words of Bittersweet Healing: *Hey, Call Me When You're Down!*

A veteran actress best known for her role as Ilyong's Mother in the dramatic mini-series *The Garden Diaries*, Kim Soomi, who was once depressed and out of her mind to the point of considering suicide, offers consolation to younger performers in her book, *Hey, Call Me When You're Down!* Amidst the recent upswing in young celebrity suicides and suicide pacts by younger people imitating these celebrities, Kim Soomi brings to the page the sympathy of a fellow sufferer. After her mother-in-law was killed in a traffic accident while she was driving, Kim Soomi became severely depressed and prayed for her own death. Since then, however, she has risen back up and become a source of comfort for others like her, doling out homemade kimchi and

preserves to those living with heartache. Kim shares anecdotes about the people she has formed relationships with over the past 60 years, and adds the words "call me" at the end. However, she does not stop there but repeatedly offers these words of consolation every chance she gets to those who are feeling dragged down by life. Her own pain was healed by others who did the same for her. For some, Kim Soomi's book could sound like nagging. But nagging or not, her words, both sweet and bitter, are a caring embrace, the best form of therapy.

Cravings, Conflicts, and Cures for Modern Life: *Psychology of City Life*

The city is a measure of the limits of human desires. But now there is *Psychology of City Life*, a self-help book for city people with their endless desires and difficulties. People tend to think of the city, an aggregate of technology and civilization, as a place where anything they dream of can come true. After the industrial era, most rural-urban migrants came in search of just this mirage. However, not everything could go the way they wanted it to. They scoured each corner of

the city in search of their "big break," only to lose their way. For those who are searching for themselves in a city devoid of communication, experiencing only rupture in their relationships, the author offers a key: the secret lies in understanding both the individual "I" and the other "you." On this basis, relationships and groups, as well as society and cities, can grow a little bit happier. The author's challenge to look inward through the daily lives of modern urbanites is the first step towards healing and recovery.

Therapeutic Reading:

An Ailing Soul Turns a Page

An Ailing Soul Turns a Page is filled with information on how to heal your emotional wounds through reading. Many of us carry private wounds, but we are afraid to address the source of this pain. This book, therefore, is a tool for overcoming that fear, as well as an entryway into healing. Healing is the main motif in Shin Kyung-sook's novel *An Isolated Room* and Gong Ji-young's novel *Maundy Thursday*, while *Cinderella* enables readers to find themselves. While reading *Children of Gwaengiburimal*, readers who once could not even bear to think about their difficult childhoods can rediscover happy memories from their youth. The author, who runs a program on therapeutic reading, describes the pain and healing of patients she has counseled and explains in detail the value of reading as a form of therapy.

Therapy is not just for those who are alienated, emotionally wounded, or struggling with anxiety. Every person in this world carries his or her own unique emotional baggage. This book is not only a treasure trove of insight and wisdom, but is an irreplaceable comfort for those in search of healing and recovery. After the Bible, the most influential book for Christians is *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis, in which he writes, "Everywhere I have sought rest and not found it, except sitting in a corner by myself with a little book." In a corner alone with a little book—what better place could there be for taking a break and unpacking your emotional baggage in the spirit of healing and recovery?

By Jang Dongseok
(book columnist)

Growing Up and Letting Go

A Gift from a Bird

Eun Hee-kyung, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp., 1995, 396p
ISBN 978-89-8571-276-7

Eun Hee-kyung is one of the major forces of contemporary Korean literature. Born in 1959, she graduated from the department of Korean Literature at Sookmyung Women's University and the department of Korean Literature at Yonsei University. For some time after graduation, she worked at publishing companies and magazines, setting her literary dreams aside. She made her literary debut in her mid-30s by winning the literary contest held by *The Dong-A Ilbo* with her short story, "A Duet." That year, she went to stay at a Buddhist temple called Anguk temple, and there she finished her first full-length novel in two months. She titled the novel *A Gift from*

a Bird, after the poem by Jacques Prevert, a French poet. *A Gift from a Bird* was awarded the first Munhakdongne Novel Award, and continues to be popular among readers today, a decade since its original publication.

A Gift from a Bird is a story that takes place between 1969 and 1995. 1969 was the year in which man landed on the moon, with Apollo 11, for the first time in the history of mankind; and in 1995, Korea launched a satellite for the first time ever, with Koreasat, a communications satellite. *A Gift from a Bird* begins with a first person narrator past her mid-30s, watching the launch of Koreasat, and reminiscing about

the year 1969 when she was a 12-year old girl. The girl is named Jinhee. Jinhee's mother committed suicide, and her father is missing. As a result, she lives with her maternal grandmother, uncle, and aunt, in a small rural village.

The 12-year old Jinhee is stuck somewhere in between. She isn't yet an adult, but she's no longer a child. She lives with her maternal grandmother's family, but without parents, she might as well be an orphan. She states, "I stopped growing when I was 12, because I understood that the world wasn't friendly towards me. I knew everything there was to know, so there was no longer a reason for me to grow." Her contradictory and cynical personality imbues the work with a peculiar feeling. Various characters with unique personalities, including Jinhee's aunt, who is childish but innocent, Hong Gi-wung, a tough guy who is also a hopeless romantic, Jang-gun's mother, who is quite talkative, Mrs. Gwangjin Tera (the Japanese pronunciation of the word "taylor"), a sympathetic middle-aged woman, and Miss Lee, a sensuous young woman, are depicted through the eyes of the 12-year old Jinhee.

A Gift from a Bird vividly restores to life the Korean society between the late 1960s and the early 1970s, the era just prior to the sweeping modernization of the country. What's remarkable about this novel, however, is that it goes beyond that. The insights on life, scattered here and there throughout the work, are enough to captivate readers. The narrator notes, "And that's how life is, as well. Absurd, trivial coincidences lead life along. So don't try to dig up meaning in everything. Life is a joke." This is a work remarkable for its manifestation of the Nietzschean that leads life into a realm of frivolity and pleasure, rather than one of oppression and responsibility. As we read *A Gift from a Bird*, we come to reflect on life as we go back and forth between tears and laughter. And in that process, we are endowed with a renewed passion for living.

By Kim Dongshik





The Geographer Who Pulled Off a Miracle

The Map Maker

Park Bumshin

Munhakdongne Publishing Corp., 2009, 359p

ISBN 978-89-546-0827-5

Kim Jeong-ho, who went by the pen name Gosanja, holds a special position in Korean history. He succeeded in creating *Daedongyeojido*, the most accurate map ever of the peninsula, despite belonging to the lower class of Joseon society, which was regimented by a strict class order. At the time, maps of the peninsula were mostly created for the purposes of military and administrative control. In an era when all information was controlled by a small minority of leaders, Kim Jeong-ho aspired to create a map for the dreams and happiness of the common people. Through the success of his magnum opus, a task unheard of even for the gentry class, let alone a mere commoner, Kim transformed himself into a mythical figure. His map *Daedongyeojido* is outstanding, nearly flawless even by the standards of modern science. Because he was able to accomplish this task under his own power without any influence from Western science, Kim stood out in the public eye all the more.

Unfortunately however, little is known about this historical figure. Author Park Bumshin focuses on the many gaps and mysteries in the life story of Kim Jeong-ho. Because there is so little concrete information, Park uses his imagination to fill in the gaps. *The Map Maker* is a biographical novel of the real-life figure Kim Jeong-ho. It is another bestseller from Park, the much-loved author of *Chollache* and *Namaste*.

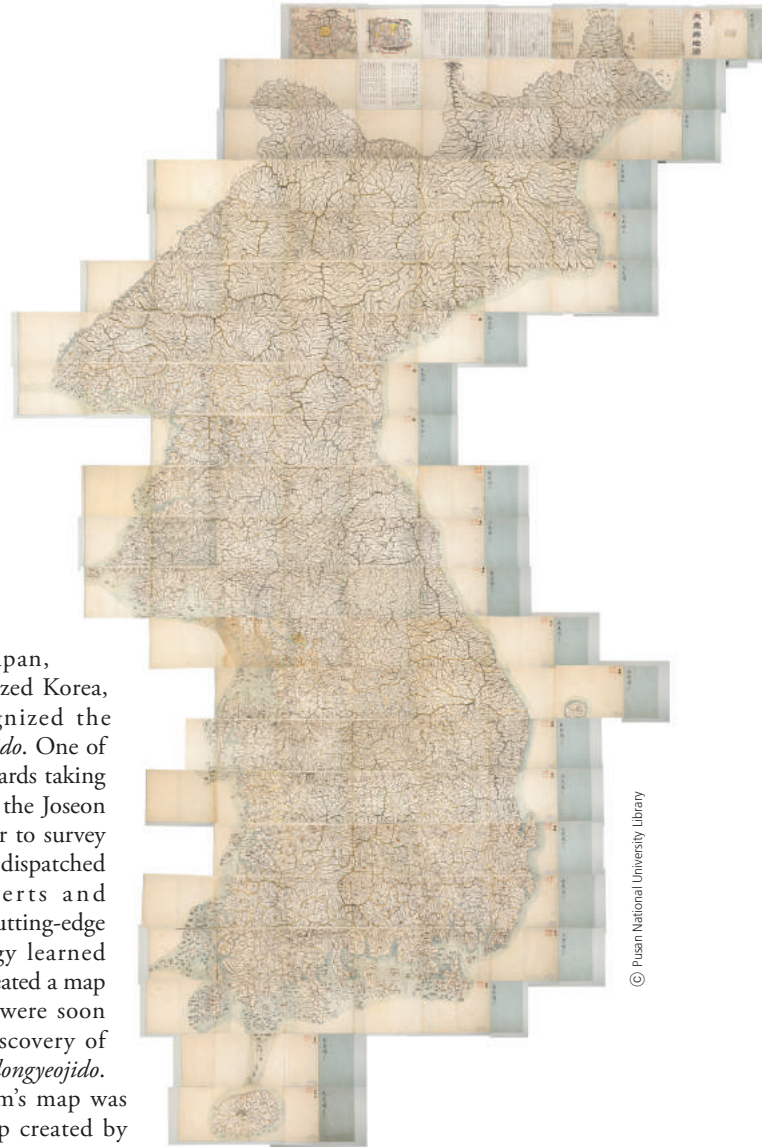
In vivid prose, Park Bumshin restores the remarkable life of a Joseon dynasty geographer, a life unimaginable for modern people through the power of science and reason alone. There are many mythical tales of the life of Kim Jeong-ho. However, few of these tales are actually true. What

is known is that Japan, at the time it colonized Korea, immediately recognized the value of *Daedongyeojido*. One of Japan's first steps towards taking control of Korea was the Joseon Land Survey. In order to survey the peninsula, Japan dispatched hundreds of experts and mobilized all of its cutting-edge scientific technology learned from the West and created a map of Korea. But they were soon shocked by their discovery of Kim Jeong-ho's *Daedongyeojido*. The accuracy of Kim's map was on par with the map created by hundreds of experts using modern technology. The Japanese were amazed by the ability of just one man, the geographer Kim Jeong-ho, who created the map during the pre-modern era when Korea had not yet become acquainted with Western technology.

For Joseon intellectuals at the time, there was hardly any such thing as the popularization of knowledge. All important knowledge was circulated through Chinese characters, which was the private reserve of intellectuals, and the printing technology that was developed was not used for the enlightenment of the common people. Knowledge was a closed sphere, circulated only among the royal palace and the literati. Kim Jeong-ho, resurrected after 200 years in Park Bumshin's *The Map Maker*, was a pioneer who strove after the popularization of knowledge. He did it for the countless commoners who could not afford the government's exorbitant taxes and were forced to wander, homeless until they died. He did it for those who could

not travel even if they wanted to, as they did not know the geography, and had to spend their lives restricted to the same place where they were born. Kim's plan was an ambitious one of creating and distributing an innovative type of map that would be easy to print and easy to carry. The life story behind this remarkable task, pulled off by a single person who received no institutional support, remains a mystery to this day. Author Park Bumshin's novel helps to restore this as yet mysterious figure and the miracle he achieved, and to bring him closer to modern readers.

By Jung Yeo-ul



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A Thin Line Between Good and Evil

Pet's Paradise

Kim Najeong, Moonji Publishing Co., Ltd.
2009, 267p, ISBN 978-89-320-1952-9

Pet's Paradise is the first short story collection by a promising young writer, Kim Najeong, who debuted in 2003. The collection of nine stories, including her debut work, "The Fifth Beatle," features her style of dry humor in stories structured around philosophical questions of good and evil.

One common theme among several of the stories in the collection is that of "the thin line between good and evil" or "cruelty disguised as goodwill." In the unusually titled story, "<< >>," Gwalho (bracket), a vocational student, finds a strange woman dressed in white who has collapsed on the street one Christmas night. Even after he wakes her, the woman cannot get up, and Gwalho does not have a cell phone to call an ambulance. So instead he carries the woman on his back and puts her in his basement. There, Gwalho feeds and clothes her while also satisfying his own

sexual urges with her. He justifies this by saying that he has saved her life. Likewise in "The Fifth Beatle," a man takes home a young girl who had been abandoned at a train station then sexually abuses her, all the while believing that he has done a good thing by giving her food and shelter. The gravity of the themes addressed in Kim's stories demonstrates the maturity of her skills as a writer, despite her being new to the literary scene.

"One Turn Around the Neighborhood, Baduki?" is an intriguing work that likewise reveals Kim's unique writing style. A crafty take on a narrative that borrows the form of a chain letter, this story is a delightful form of metafiction that explores the birth of a story and writing itself.

By Ko Mihye

Historical Intrigue with a Side of Coffee

Russian Coffee

Kim Takhwan, Sallim Publishing Co., 2009, 242p
ISBN 978-89-522-1196-5

Kim Takhwan's *Russian Coffee* is an exhilarating historical tale of the plot to assassinate King Gojong, the 26th king of the Joseon dynasty, set at the end of the 19th century when coffee was first introduced to Korea.

Author of *The Banggakbon Murder Case* and *Lishim*, Kim Takhwan is known for his popular novels based on actual historical figures and events. After becoming acquainted with the story of the official interpreter who tried to assassinate King Gojong by slipping opium into his coffee in a late Joseon dynasty history book, *Russian*

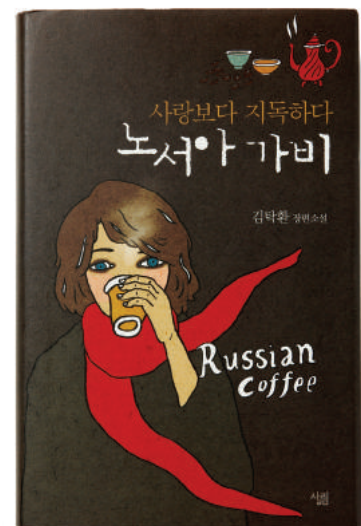
Coffee was born. But instead of reproducing the assassination conspiracy as it actually happened, Kim puts his imagination to work to create the livelier tale of Danya, the bold and charming heroine of the novel. *Russian Coffee* opens with Danya, the daughter of King Gojong's official interpreter, heading for Russia alone at the age of 19 after her father's untimely death, where she joins a gang of grifters.

There, Danya joins hands with a Korean man named Ivan, who is part of another gang, and decides to attack a parade of Korean envoys returning from Russia. But instead she follows Ivan, who becomes King Gojong's interpreter, to Korea, and finds herself in charge of King Gojong's coffee service at the encouragement of a Russian envoy. In other words, she becomes Korea's very first barista.

The novel instantly captures readers with its tale of conspiracy, the fate of Joseon hanging in the balance, and Danya's compassion for the lonely king.

The plot intrigues with its twists and turns, but its strongest point is the character of Danya. In contrast to other Joseon dynasty female characters that are depicted as passive and submissive, Danya takes the initiative to forge her own path, leaving a strong impression on readers in the process.

By Ko Mihye



Can You Love an Ugly Girl?

Pavane for the Deceased Princess

Park Min-gyu, Wisdomhouse Publishing Co. Ltd.
2009, 420p, ISBN 978-89-5913-391-8



Pak Min-gyu is an author renowned for bringing about changes in the literary landscape of Korea in the 2000s through his original imagination and unconventional sentences. His novels are fraught with unusual characters, such as Superman and Wonder Woman, and bizarre incidents, such as a table tennis match between an ostracized middle school kid and an alien, with the fate of the earth at stake. A deeper look into his novels, however, reveals the author's sympathy and compassion for the weak and the marginalized in today's society.

Pavane for the Deceased Princess is about an unlikely romance by Park, for it is a love story between a very ugly girl, dubbed "the ugliest girl of the century," and a handsome guy. The novel poses the question, "Can you love an ugly girl?" a question that's simple, yet difficult to answer.

The three protagonists have all been traumatized by outward appearances. The first person narrator, the male protagonist, was born to a handsome father and an ugly mother. His father, who was a third-rate actor, lived off his mother, then abandoned his family when he became famous. Yohan, a mentor who connects the female protagonist with the narrator, has also been wounded in the past by the suicide of his beautiful mother, who lived as a mistress of a wealthy man. The female protagonist is

so ugly that she can't carry on a normal life in society. The narrator is reminded of his mother when he meets her at a department store where he works part-time. Little by little, the two grow close, and cautiously fall in love. But the girl's wound is too deep for her to accept his love wholeheartedly, and she leaves him. With Yohan's suicide attempt, the three go their separate ways. A long time later, the narrator, who has become a writer, makes inquiries on the whereabouts of the girl and goes to see her in Germany. At the conclusion of the novel, the author has added a "writer's cut," presenting the readers with an open ending.

The author, who has always shown concern for the weak and the disadvantaged in capitalistic societies, focuses this time on those who are marginalized and victimized in a society of lookism. He conveys the message that if lookism is the illness from which this society is suffering, the way to treat this illness is through love.

By Lee Yeong-gyeong

What Do People Do on the Subway?

Dreams of a Subway Peddler

Woo Seung-mi, Minumsa, 2009, 261p
ISBN 978-89-374-8265-6

They say that an average of seven million people use a total of nine subway lines in Seoul a day. What do those seven million people do on the subway? In one excerpt of the novel *Dreams of a Subway Peddler* by Woo Seung-mi, the narrator observes: "It seemed that the people on the subway trains that go around and around beneath the city have lost their sense of sight and hearing. Most of them have their eyes closed whether or not they are actually sleeping; eyes that are wide open are fixed on PMP screens or books. Eyes that are neither here nor there are wandering somewhere up in the air, avoiding the eyes of others, and the ears are plugged up with earphones, headphones, and mobile phones." The atmosphere is tense with

passengers' eyes and ears covered up, being carried off some place. The protagonist is a man on the verge of turning 30, just about to start peddling goods on the subway. But is it really possible to sell anything to people with their eyes closed, and their ears plugged up?

To sell something, you must first get people to open their eyes and unplug their ears. In other words, in order to be good at selling something, a person must also be good at communicating. Perhaps because of this, Kim Cheol, who has been learning sales skills from Mr. Lee, the king of subway peddling, is hard at work learning how to communicate. His conversational partner is Suji, a girl he meets on the subway. At the time he meets her, she is handing out fliers that say, "I'm a deaf-mute. I can't talk, and I can't hear. I lost my parents when I was young, and am now living with my younger brother. My brother is seriously disabled—he can't talk, he can't hear, and he can't see." Isn't that absurd? How can you talk to someone who can't see or hear or talk, or in other words, whose eyes and ears are literally covered up?

Dreams of a Subway Peddler is a novel that illustrates the process through which strangers meet and come to communicate with one another by learning new languages—sign language and Braille. Learning a new language isn't something that's necessarily limited to relationships with the disabled. Communication between people without disabilities often fails. We should all learn a new language; it could make a new method of communication possible. The novel was awarded the Today's Writer Award in 2009.

By Lee Yeong-gyeong



한나에세이



그런, 사랑 이었네

마음을 다 털어놓고 나나 할 수 있었다.
세상과 나를 움직이는 게 무엇인지 보였다.
세상을 향한, 여러분을 향한, 그리고 자신을 향한
내 마음 가장 밑바닥에 무엇이 있는지도
또렷하게 보였다.

그런, 사랑이었다.

푸른숲

Han Bi-ya's Message of Affirmation

It Turns Out, It Was Love

Han Bi-ya, Prunsoop Publishing Co., Ltd., 2009, 300p
ISBN 978-89-7184-817-3

Han Bi-ya was first a traveler who wrote *Daughter of the Wind: Travels Around the World*, which caused a stir in Korean society. Soon after, she transformed into an activist for the poor and captured readers' hearts once again with *Marching Off the Map*. Now, before leaving Korea to study more and pursue her latest vision, Han releases her latest book.

It Turns Out, It Was Love is the new collection of essays by South Korea's celebrated travel writer, relief worker, and refugee advocate. Han Bi-ya is a role model for many young people in Korea, and is regularly mentioned as someone they would most like to meet. Naturally, she has a large and faithful fan base. After having read Han's books, many fervent fans have gone against their parents' pressures and entered the field of social work. Some have gone on backpacking trips, even following the same routes that Han had used.

Han's life and vision continue to inspire and fascinate readers, but Han didn't always lead an adventurous life. She initially worked at a prestigious global public relations and communications firm, but decided to quit when she couldn't forget her early dream of globetrotting. For the next seven years, she explored the world, especially many isolated regions, alone and mostly on foot. Her account of crossing borders and being in dangerous, yet emotionally stirring situations was published in her first book *Daughter of the Wind: Travels Around the World*.

While on her travels, she realized that refugees were in urgent need of assistance, and decided to devote her life to helping refugees as a relief worker. She even learned Chinese, an immensely useful tool in her line of relief work, and became the team leader of World Vision Korea Emergency Relief in 2001. Her experiences of working in emergency relief have been published in her book *Marching Off the Map*.

Han has always used her books to

plan what she hopes to achieve, and then pursued these goals with passion. Because of her infectious enthusiasm and boundless energy, readers eagerly await her new publications. This is a great example of the dynamic interaction between writer and reader.

In 2009, Han stopped her work with World Vision and turned her steps to her next project—studying the theories concerning humanitarian work and support. Han's latest book *It Turns Out, It Was Love* can be considered as a sort of respite before she goes on to tackle her next goal.

Han has clearly demonstrated both her courage and passion to the world as a seasoned backpacker and the team leader of emergency relief in devastated areas. Recently however, she has shown readers a slightly different side to her character, for her latest book is much more personal than her previous works. But despite the slight change in tone, she writes energetically and sincerely as always. Instead of merely sweet words or cheap sentiment, she never speaks beyond what her experience has afforded her. Particularly in this book, Han reaches out to young people who are struggling to find meaning or direction in their lives, saying that she had wanted to address many of the questions she had been asked by readers at conferences and on her website.

One example of wise advice she gives, among many others, is "Knock until you receive." By speaking from personal experience, Han is able to transform this well-worn phrase into something new.

On her way to a conference in Taiwan, it looked as though she would miss her flight, but she didn't give up. She transferred from a car to a motorcycle taxi and raced to the airport. There, she begged the airport attendant to check her in, managed to stop the connecting bus that had already started to leave, and finally managed to board the plane, and at the conference in Taiwan, she was able to give a successful presentation. Han tells us that it is only natural to feel discouraged at times. However, she urges us to make one last attempt right when we are about to give up, because that may be the moment someone is about to open the door.

Han's book is full of heartfelt and encouraging words that seem to come from an older sibling. It contains all kinds of practical tips on life, such as how to relieve fatigue after a long flight, how to write well, and even how to pray. As always with her other books, this book, too, is for anyone who is searching for happiness, passion, and meaning.

By Han Mihwa

How to Raise Your Child to Become a World Leader

Virtue Over Skill

Chun Koh Hesung, Joongang Books, 2009, 450p
ISBN 978-89-6188-926-1



On July 23rd, 2009, the influential American newspaper *The Wall Street Journal* featured an article about the Koh brothers: Howard Koh, United States Assistant Secretary for Health and Harold Goh, Legal Adviser of the Department of State. The article, which dealt with the Koh brothers' rise to the top of the Washington power structure was titled, "Power Siblings Hit the Capital." It discussed in great detail the Koh brothers' parents, who immigrated to the States to flee from the military coup in the 1960s, and their strong commitment toward academics. The secret to the brothers' success, the article concluded, was the parents' educational philosophy: "It's one thing to get a great education and do well in school, but it's not important if you can't ultimately use it to help other people." In *Virtue over Skill*, the mother of the powerful Koh brothers, Dr. Chun Koh Hesung, shares her life story as well as her thoughts on education. Dr. Chun, vividly recounts how she was able to successfully raise all six of her children, despite all the hardships the family faced in a new

country. She also talks about operating the East Rock Institute for over 50 years, and how she was able to retain her pride in being Korean while living in American society. The book is a vivid and detailed portrait of a family.

All six of Dr. Chun's children graduated from either Harvard or Yale. The number of doctorate degrees obtained by the eight members of the Koh family total 11. And this is why, in 1988, the U.S. Department of Education recognized the family as a fine example of Asian American upbringing. The concept that best explains Dr. Chun's education philosophy is "virtue over skill;" in other words, "Before you become a man of skill, first you should become a man of virtue." Of course there's more to a fine education than just philosophy. Dr. Chun always valued deeds over words. In the book, she says, "Instead of just telling the children to study, my husband and I would lead by example. And because my husband and I were always studying in front of the children, the children became interested in books very naturally." She also says, "Do your best in raising your children, but do your best in living your life as well. This is what I want to emphasize."

By Richard Hong

Competitor as Partner

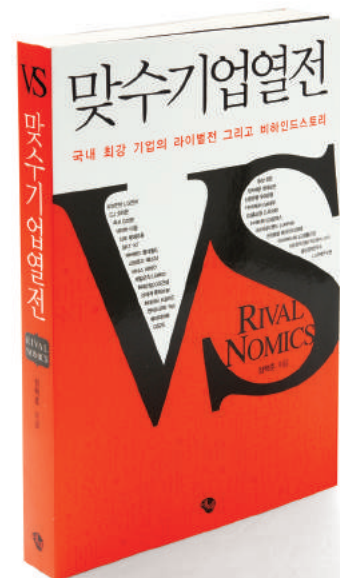
Rival-Nomics

Jung Hyuk-jun, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp.
2009, 399p, ISBN 978-89-93905-03-8

The author Jung Hyuk-jun, the chief financial analyst for the weekly magazine *The Hankyoreh* 21, describes the driving force of Korean economy as "Rival-nomics." From Samsung Electronics and LG Electronics, Naver and Daum, SKT and KT, Nongshim and Samyang, to Lee Soo-man's SM and Park Jin-young's JYP, the author claims that the fierce rivalry and competition between companies within the same field—a phenomenon without parallel outside of Korea—is what helped Korea become an economical powerhouse. From a unique perspective of rival relationships, this book systematically organizes 52 of the most famous Korean companies, their founding philosophies, and management strategies.

Naver and Daum are two Internet companies that best represent Korea. By launching the Hanmail email service in 1997, Daum was the first of the two companies to make a grand entrance into the field. Within a year, Daum had well over a million members, and by 2003, the number of users reached 34 million. Daum, a 100 percent Korean-owned company, easily beat out international companies such as Yahoo. They seemed to be without competition. But something strange began to happen. It began with Naver taking over Hangame. Then by unleashing the integrated search function, knowledge search function, instant popular word search function, and others, Naver started to slowly make inroads within the field. While Daum was busy branching out—by jumping into insurance and shopping, and by taking over Lycos—Naver focused solely on improving their search engine. Eventually Naver was able to dethrone Daum and become the number one Internet company in Korea. The intense battle for the number one spot between these two companies still continues to this day, and because of such fierce competition, even companies like Google have a hard time penetrating the Korean Internet market. There are many other examples of intense rivalries between companies in this book guaranteed to keep you turning the pages for more. Also worth noting is the following recommendation from Professor Ahn Chul-soo: "This book proves the fact that a competitor is actually a partner."

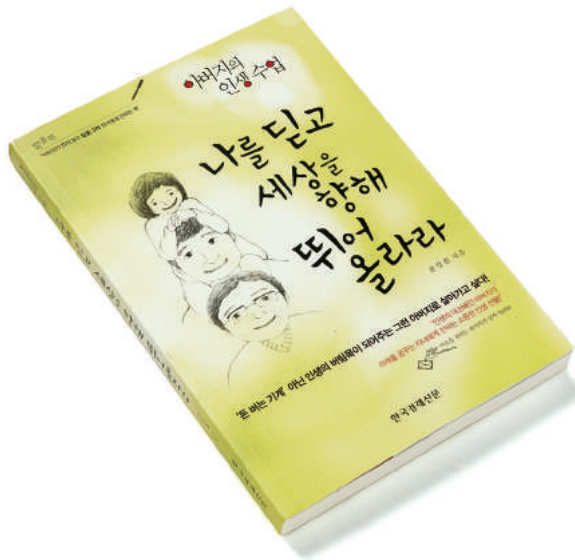
By Richard Hong



A Message from Father

Step Over Me and Stand Taller

Song Kilweon, The Korea Economic Daily & Business Publications, Inc., 2009, 270p
ISBN 978-89-475-2702-6



Step Over Me and Stand Taller is a book of advice from a father to his children. The hopes of a father, who wants his children to stand taller through him, are divided into the seven categories of dream, growth, challenge, setbacks, understanding, happiness, and love.

The author of this book is Song Kilweon, a pastor and the leader of "High Family," an NGO with the aim of building healthy families. He has drawn out thoughts of wisdom from his own life experience. He also makes frank confessions as someone who has tasted both the sweet and bitter in life. He exposes his mistakes and limitations, conveying the wish that his children will be wiser than he was.

Each and every piece of advice is full of hope and affection for his children. He emphasizes great ambition through such advice as "Sleep like a shrimp, but dream of whales," "Be as Don Quixote and challenge yourself," "If you trip on a rock, pick it up and turn it into a fortress," but gives heartwarming encouragement as well, such as "Moments of despair pass as sudden showers," and "It's better to be second and serene, than to be first and fretful." Song gives practical advice, too, such as, "How

to choose a good spouse." In choosing a spouse, he says to ask, "Are they proud of their parents?" "Do they know how to laugh?" "Do they do their work cheerfully?" and "Do they know how to share?" among other questions. He also emphasized that in order to live a happy life, you need to make active efforts to that end, such as, "think of three good things that happened during the day," "enjoy the pleasant moments of everyday life," and "picture yourself in ten years at your most successful."

The author recommends that you use this book as an "underlined book," meaning that as a father, you can read this book first and underline the parts you like before giving it to your children. When they see the parts that have been underlined for them, they will know where to turn for help when they're faced with crises in life. They will also be moved by the affection their father has for them, though he may not be good at expressing himself.

By Lee Ji-young

My Year at the South Pole

Thirty-three, to the End of the Earth
Koh Kyungnam, Book Sense, 2009, 219p
ISBN 978-89-956772-9-2

A total of 20 nations currently run 47 permanent research stations throughout Antarctica, and several thousands of people visit the continent every year to conduct or support research. Since 1988, South Korea has been operating a permanent research base called King Sejong Station on Antarctica, and each year, people in every line of work from researchers to cooks are recruited to staff the station.

One day, the author Koh sees a job posting for health care workers to work at King Sejong Station. He applies on a whim and finds himself leaving behind his busy yet monotonous life to go to the South Pole. There, he expects to be completely cut off from the rest of the world, and why

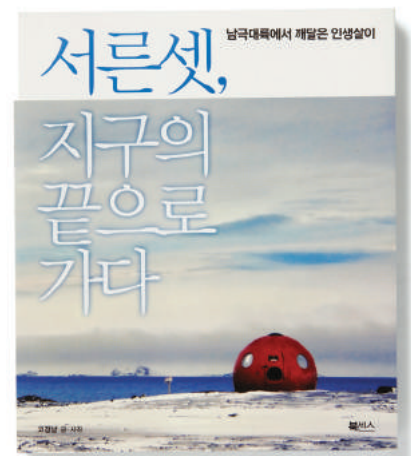
not? After all, the South Pole is the farthest south one can go, a land of punishing winds, harsh winters, and the white night where the sun rises at ten in the morning, only to set at two in the afternoon.

But when Koh arrives at the South Pole, all of his expectations are overturned. Who knew that the mundane everyday could also exist on Antarctica? He ends up spending more time in the kitchen than the medical office, but what's more shocking is that there is Internet service at the South Pole! The books he orders on Amazon are delivered to him and he is able to chat for hours with friends back home on his Internet phone. Around the time he begins to wonder why he came to the South Pole in the first place, he develops the habit of going for walks. As he records these walks with writings and pictures, the 33-year old reflects on his life, and this book is the account of Koh's physical, as well as inner, journey.

The South Pole may not be a place most people would like to live, but experienced through pictures and writing, the landscape has a strange, unreal beauty. The morning sun that dyes the ice ridges red is like a surrealist painting; the irritable Chinstrap Penguin, which looks as though it has a black string tied under its chin, looks merely adorable and sweet; and the sea leopards that doze in the sun appear to be at complete peace.

Koh makes the important discovery that wherever he may go, unless he is fully awake, he will always be at the mercy of monotony. The author's photography collection *A Walk at the South Pole* was published in Japan in 2008.

By Han Mihwa





Are We Still Altruistic?

Evolution of Human Altruism
Choi Jung-kyoo, Puriwa Ipari Publishing Co., 2009
400p, ISBN 978-89-90024-95-4

The author Choi Jung-kyoo is a prominent economist in the field of evolutionary game theory. Evolutionary game theory applies game theory to complicated social phenomena within the framework of evolution, and studies the interaction of humans whose behaviors evolve under the influence of the environment in which they find themselves. It is a fast-moving field in the new paradigm of social science that includes economics and biology.

Traditional economics assume that people are innately selfish, so it is only natural to think that the selfish individual gains much more than the altruistic individual who helps another at his own cost. Despite this reasoning, humans tend to be altruistic. Why is that?

Altruistic individuals survive by interacting with other altruistic individuals, and selfish individuals maintain or overthrow their present conditions by interacting with other selfish individuals. At first, selfish individuals will abound, but as altruistic individuals continue to interact with one another, a group of altruistic members will form, ensuring their survival. If evolutionary selection is made according to the fitness of the group, and not the

fitness of the individual, a group with more altruistic individuals is more likely to survive an attack than a group with more selfish individuals.

The author claims that an altruistic human is very important to the capitalist market economy. It is common for a contract to be flawed because all aspects of the commodity cannot be fully represented on paper, and so an altruistic individual is needed to mediate and smooth out any uncertainties so that the transaction can happen smoothly. The author utilizes many experiments and concrete examples to describe the latest theories of altruism. The author has written about this complicated and rather unwieldy subject in a clear and accessible manner, so the book will surely interest any reader.

By Pyo Jeonghun

Everything You Wanted to Know About Noodles

Noodle Road
Lee Wookjung, Wisdomhouse Publishing Co., Ltd.
2009, 401p. ISBN 978-89-5913-377-4

The immensely popular Korean TV documentary *Noodle Road* was widely praised and will soon air in 20 countries around the world. Now the producer of the popular documentary has written a book by the same name.

Lee begins by asking: When did noodles first appear in the world? Who invented them? Where were they made? How did noodles spread throughout the world to become international fare?

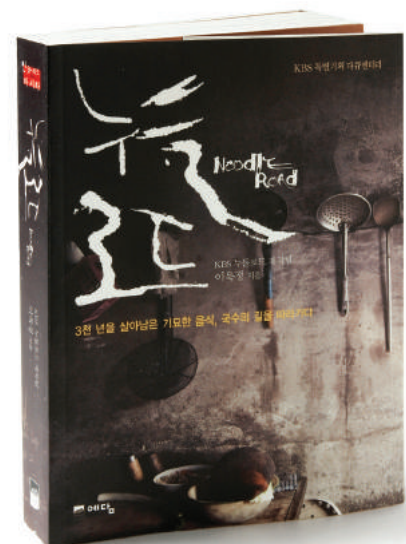
The book alleges that noodles most likely originated in the Xinjiang Uygur

autonomous region of China. In this district of Central Asia, ancient European mummies and relics were found, and among them, a relic that pertains to the noodle prototype was uncovered. However, noodles weren't monopolized by one culture or area. They began to flourish, spreading to Thailand, Vietnam, Bhutan, Korea, Japan, and all parts of Asia, with each region forming its own unique noodle culture.

Although Asia seemed to be the center of the noodle culture, the Middle East, Europe, and Africa, and other parts of the world developed their own distinct noodle cultures. In this way, noodles continued to evolve in diverse ways, depending on many factors such as the ingredients, cooking directions, techniques, and utensils used. Lee compares this with the collaborative effort between England, Germany, France, Spain, and other countries to produce the Airbus. Why are human beings so captivated by noodles? What is the charm in noodles?

Noodles are inexpensive. Noodles possess many nutrients. They can be prepared quickly, they can be packaged to go, and they can be eaten anywhere. By merely adjusting the noodles, soup, sauce, or garnish, an endless possibility of dishes can be made. Together with many photographs, this book depicts the culture and history of noodles in a fascinating way.

By Pyo Jeonghun



For the Layman Who Appreciates Art

Museum of Knowledge

Yi Joo-heon, Artbooks Publishing Corp., 2009, 336p
ISBN 978-89-6196-042-7



The author Yi Joo-heon is Korea's most popular arts essayist and writer. Yi enjoys a wide readership by writing about his extensive knowledge of fine arts in simple and easy-to-understand language. This book, too, reflects the author's apt ability. Yi states:

"The size of one's knowledge does not simply decide the ability to appreciate art or the level at which it is appreciated. It is far more important to use intuition in order to recognize the true nature of a work of art. In order to develop this ability, one needs to make a real effort to expand both knowledge and experience. Knowledge and experience are like the beads of a necklace, and intuition is the string that holds these beads together."

As the title suggests, this book is about gaining those beads, and the beads Yi puts forth are 20 keywords. Some of these terms include: Orientalism, Impressionism, the media, the CIA (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency), Abstract Expressionism, allegory, the male and female nude, an artist's studio, art objects and plunder, and many more.

When we talk about nudes today,

we tend to think of the female nude, but history demonstrates that representations of male nudity, and not female nudity, were the convention, since ancient Greece was an androcentric society. Depictions of women have also changed over time, following the changing social realities of women, and the world has seen women portrayed from passive and traditionally feminine poses to increasingly provocative and suggestive poses. The author also points out that Jackson Pollack, one of the most famous artists of American modern art, owed much of his renown to a U.S. culturally imperialistic strategy that promoted American Abstract Expressionists.

Museum of Knowledge is neither a book on art criticism nor an academic research manual about art. It is instead a practical guide in helping ordinary people who are interested in art to delve a little deeper into the world of fine art in a friendly and unpretentious way.

By Pyo Jeonghun

In Search of Understanding the Agonized Artist

The Agonized Perspective

Suh Kyung-sik, Dolbegae Publishers 2009, 365p
ISBN 978-89-7199-338-5

Suh Kyung-sik is a Korean essayist and critic born in Japan. Due to Japan's colonization of Korea in the past, Suh, along with other Korean residents in Japan, has experienced various hardships as a minority in Japan. With these experiences forming the basis of his outlook, Suh has written widely on various subjects such as society, politics, arts, and culture from an existential and analytical point of view. In 1995, he won the prestigious Japan Essayist Club Award, and is well-loved by many Korean readers.

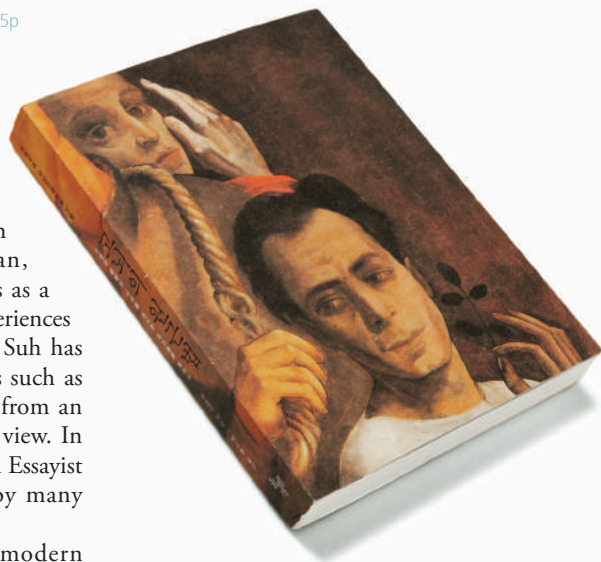
This book, which is about modern Western art, deals particularly with German

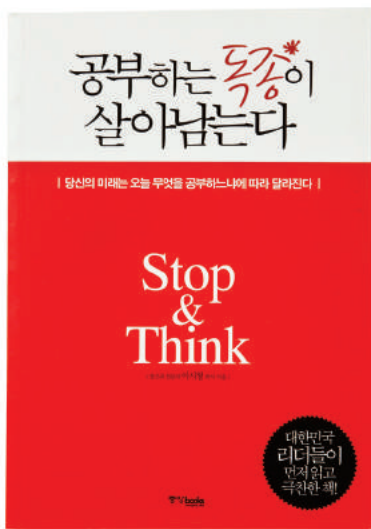
Expressionist artists, as well as van Gogh and Caravaggio, who are considered to have greatly influenced Expressionism. Suh claims that the unique characteristics of Expressionists lie in "their penetrating gaze that can perceive the very limits of reality and the strength to powerfully express that gaze." It is because of this kind of strength that art and reality, as well as art and history, can come together.

Vincent van Gogh, whom the author considers to be a pioneer in demonstrating the agony of modern art, encapsulated the anguish of the artist in a capitalistic world. Contemporary art criticism tends to separate the artist from the work, but Suh suggests that van Gogh is an artist whose work cannot be separated from his life. Van Gogh's work is deeply connected to the body. For example, van Gogh invested an exceptional amount of time and energy into his artwork, and often used layered pointillism, broad, gestural brush strokes, and densely painted impasto.

The book is both the author's personal interpretation and commentary about artists and their work, and a space where questions regarding the identity of modern art are raised. These kinds of questions do not merely concern art, but encourage a deeper examination of the self in the modern age.

By Pyo Jeonghun





Enthusiasm for the Brain

Study Enthusiasts Survive!
Lee Si-hyung, Joongang Books, 2009, 262p
ISBN 978-89-6188-811-0

We live in an era dubbed the era of uncertainty. In the past, a person's life was bound, to an extent, to follow a set course; today, however, no one can predict what kind of a life they will lead in the future. What we need in such a difficult time is to study. Dr. Lee Si-hyung, a prominent Korean psychiatrist and brain scientist who turned the Korean word *hwa-byeong*, the term for a formless disease, into a psychiatric term used worldwide, maintains that only "study enthusiasts" can survive. What he's saying is that studying is not a duty for students only, but an essential tool for a lifetime of growth and progress.

The word enthusiast in this book refers to someone who can become totally immersed in doing something while enjoying it at the same time. People turn into enthusiasts when there is something they really want to accomplish. The Korean women's archery team, who lost six consecutive games in the Olympics, went through intense training to learn to maintain composure, even wrapping snakes around their necks; but their efforts were made with a willing heart because they had a clear goal.

This book does not urge readers simply to study, but informs them of specific

strategies on how to study. Studying can be much more fun, and easier as well, when we learn the principle of how our brains function. There is, indeed, a way to study in an efficient and creative manner, allowing the brain to have fun, instead of forcing it to do what it doesn't want to do.

By Richard Hong

The Infinite Wisdom of Korean Food

A Personal Record of a Thousand Years of Korean Food
Chung Haekyung, Thinking Tree Publishing Co., 2009
309p, ISBN 978-89-8498-975-7

The Mediterranean diet is known as one of the healthiest in the world. On the island of Crete, the rate of death related to heart disease is lower than that of any other country in the world. The Mediterranean diet traditionally includes fish, vegetables, olive and canola oil, walnuts, and other foods that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, with very little consumption of red meat. The ratio of meat to vegetable consumption is about 3:7.

The traditional Korean diet is very similar to the Mediterranean diet. Korean vegetable dishes are usually prepared using vegetable oil and only a small amount of red meat is consumed on average. Koreans also enjoy fermented foods such as hot pepper paste, soy bean paste, and soy sauce. The consumption ratio of meat to vegetables is about 2:8, which actually makes the Korean diet healthier than the Mediterranean diet. Sadly, though, the world is aware of only a few Korean dishes, such as *kimchi*, *bulgoki*, *bibimbap*, and *samgaetang*. This is due to the fact that the culture and philosophy of Korean food, which has a long history of over a thousand years, is virtually unknown. *A Personal Record of a Thousand Years of Korean Food* is a book that not only recognizes the value of Korean food, but also recognizes the importance of culture. In order for Korean food to be recognized more widely, its philosophy and culture must first be explained, rather than just

listing detailed cooking methods and introducing individual dishes. This book is a comprehensive guide to the diverse range of Korean dishes, and more importantly, their origins and cultural basis.

Author and Professor Chung Haekyung is an activist for Korean food. In her book, she emphasizes the unique culture of Korean food that is very different from that of Western food. Korean food is unique in that it has a very close relationship to nature, for it utilizes all kinds of herbs and wild greens that are prepared in the most natural way. The art of fermentation, which allows food like kimchi to be stored for a very long time, is also highly developed. Secondly, Korean food is steeped in Eastern philosophy, more specifically the ideas of yin and yang. Korean food does not place greater importance on meats or meat-eating, for meat consumption needs to be balanced with vegetable consumption, just as the cosmic dual forces need to be in balance. Likewise, a particular flavor is not preferred over others, since the most ideal taste is believed to be the harmony of five colors—red, yellow, blue, black, and white—and five flavors—sweetness, sourness, saltiness, spiciness, and bitterness. Thirdly, Korean food is considered to have both nutritional and medicinal value. Medicine and food both have the same roots. Eating is not merely a means to consume calories, for food should benefit the body.

Recently, we've seen a greater interest in the world of Korean food. Through this book, readers will realize that Korean food is not only good for the body, but also good for the mind and soul.

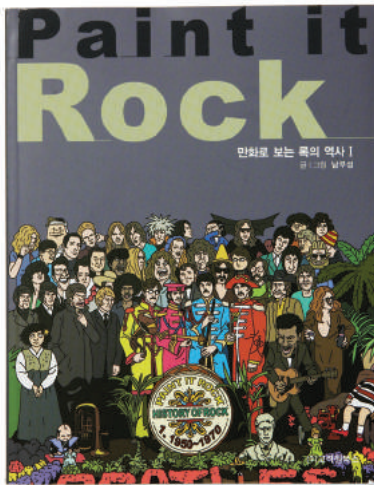
By Han Mihwa



Rockers Come to Life

Paint It Rock

Nam Mu-seong, Koreaonebooks, 2009, 359p
ISBN 978-89-91264-88-5



The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, and Led Zeppelin—legendary musicians who have graced the history of rock have come to life again as characters in a graphic novel. They even come off as funny, with comic lines. As the subtitle “A Graphic Novel on the History of Rock” indicates, the book expounds on the history of rock music, from its conception to the renaissance of rock in the 1960s and 70s. The book delves into the music and the lives of various musicians, ranging from Chuck Berry, who established the basis for the rock and roll sound, the Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, The Rolling Stones, and Pink Floyd, to Led Zeppelin, illustrating the process through which rock music, conceived amid social, cultural, and political changes after the Second World War, established itself as popular music among people worldwide.

The author, a renowned jazz critic, garnered a great response with *Jazz It Up*, or “A Graphic Novel on the History of Jazz.” A so-called rock and roll kid himself, the author spent a year and a half researching a variety of materials, such as interviews, autobiographies, photographs, and album covers, for this work. The book unfolds in a fascinating and imaginative way, with a look into the lives of numerous rock musicians and their relationships with

one another, tracing the tracks of the music they made.

In particular, the book is fraught with clever parodies and a sharp sense of humor. Even the cover of the book features a parody of the cover of the album “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band.” Buddy Holly, who appears on a discussion show as a panel member, loses his temper, saying, “Are you ignoring me because I’m dead?” and when Led Zeppelin was formed, Jimmy Page, Robert Plant, and John Bonham pass out when they see each other play. When you read this book, chuckling to yourself, you will get a vivid picture of the history and the spirit of rock music. Hence the words of a music critic: “Don’t underestimate this book just because it’s a graphic novel.”

By Kim Jinwoo

Through Chuse, a cat that moves a little slowly, is gentle, and so good that it can’t kill a single bug, the author conveys a message that sometimes, in a world in which everyone says that you have to be special and remarkable and stand out in some way, “not having something means you have something more.” Also, through her observations on Perkhan, whose main pleasure in life is to watch the world of human beings despite having lost sight in one eye because of a human being, the author asks if happiness can’t be found somewhere between “the life of animals who don’t wallow in self-pity but live faithfully in each moment, and the life of human beings who have compassion for other creatures.”

Nabi, is the most common name for cats in Korea. Meaning “butterfly,” the name symbolizes the immortality of human souls. The author conjectures that, “Perhaps people name their cats ‘Nabi’ to symbolize eternity or immortality, for they say that cats have nine lives.”

The author says that “cats may be a gift from God to humans, seeing that humans cannot fill up the emptiness in their lives on their own.” Thus, she emphasizes that we must love the cats around us, and all other living creatures as well.

By Kim Jinwoo

Life Among the Cats

A World Without Nabi

Kim Eun-hee, Bookfactory, 2008, 227p
ISBN 978-89-9575-043-8

Cindy is a cat with a lot of motherly affection; Perkhan is cheerful and optimistic; Chuse is a little slow, and is afraid of mice and bugs.

A World Without Nabi depicts the 10 years of life together shared by a graphic novelist and her cats, whose personalities are as distinct as those of human beings. Cat lovers in Korea consider it to be “the best graphic novel on cats.”

Through thick line drawings, the book illustrates the everyday life and habits of the three cats, and what the author has learned by living with them. At times, the feelings and thoughts of the cats are expressed. The author, who has lived with cats for nearly 20 years, has hidden throughout the book remarkable insights on life and living creatures that she would never have gained without the cats.



From the Drawer of Memories

View from the Rooftop

Jeong Songhee, Sai Comics, 2009, 180p
ISBN 978-89-9078-177-2



Six-year-old Songhee's favorite food in the world is *jajangmyeon* (noodles with black bean sauce). Not surprisingly, she is all for it when her brother suggests they go and ask their father to take them out for *jajangmyeon*. Her legs ache and her stomach grumbles. But imagining the lovely *jajangmyeon* is enough to keep her happy on the way to seeing their father. Finally they reach the restaurant, but just as Songhee tries to ask her father for *jajangmyeon*, her brother pinches her. He doesn't want her to ask when "Daddy's boss" is there with him. That night Songhee makes a wish to the Moon. "Please, let me have as much *jajangmyeon* as I want, just once."

The story is based on the author's childhood experiences as the youngest of eight daughters and one son. The lives of her father, who works as a staff member at the local hospital, her mother, who runs an inn, and her older sisters and brother three years older than she are told through the eyes of the child Songhee.

The author's experiences are the kind that anyone can relate to from their own childhood: Songhee getting lost on the way home from school, the day a friend's mother called her "that girl from the

inn," or Songhee ashamed at herself for coveting her seatmate's snack so much she grovels like a beggar and then takes it like a bully. The author brings out such small, insignificant incidents from her drawer of memories and deliberately explores what they mean. The housetop of the title refers to looking back from a distance, or letting go to the wind.

This book is both the tale of a child's observations of the world and the story of her growing up, learning to relate to the rest of the world. Songhee is so bored she insists "I wanna go to school" and goes a year early. School is just as boring, however, beating the same dreary knowledge into everyone. "I wondered how I would survive the boredom if this was life," says Songhee in one memorable passage.

By Kim Jinwoo

A Temperature that Changes the World

100°C A Burning Memory

Choi Kyu-seok, Changbi Publishers, Inc., 2009, 211p
ISBN 978-89-364-7166-8

In January 1987, when college student Bak Jong-cheol dies from water torture, Yeongho, another college student agonizes behind prison bars over whether he can really change the world. As he agonizes, a prisoner of conscience who is serving with him says, "Water boils when it reaches 100°C. So you can use a thermometer to see how much longer it should be heated and when it will start boiling. You can't measure the temperature of a human being, though. You can't tell what temperature a person has reached, and how much longer the heat should be kept on. That's why you get scared and give up, thinking the person will never reach the point of boiling. People do start boiling, however, when they reach 100°C. History has proven that."

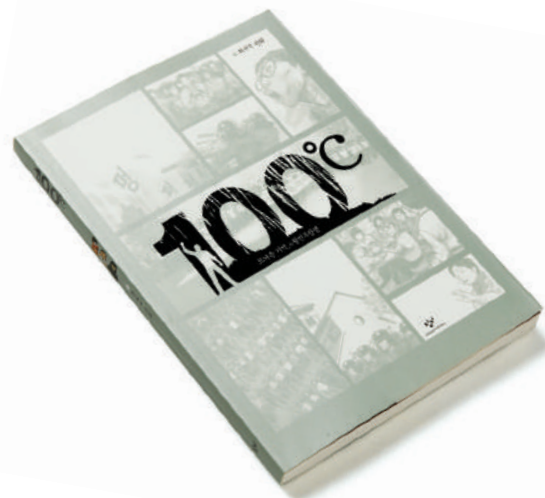
This graphic novel by Choi Kyu-seok, a young graphic novelist carrying on

the tradition of realistic graphic novels in Korea, restores to vivid life the process of democratic resistance in June 1987. It is a classic case of 'faction' that incorporates the story of Yeong-ho, an ordinary boy becoming a college student and opening his eyes to a world of which he hadn't been aware, with the historical facts of the June resistance. The author has succeeded in accomplishing the difficult task of bringing back historical facts to life in the form of a graphic novel without altering the facts, based on extensive research through history books, memoirs, films, and various interviews.

The work generated an explosive response from netizens when it appeared on the website of the June Memorial Association for Civil Democracy. With its publication as a single volume, an appendix, titled "So What?" has been added, explaining the meaning of democracy and its current condition through the author's sense of humor. His ingenious sense of humor leads readers to seriously ponder the question of what must be done in this present day of 2009, after a return from June 1987, when formal democracy was established through the power of the people.

The book tenaciously questions the basis on which democracy must be maintained. The author states that although democracy may seem insignificant, we must not forget that countless people shed blood and sweat for it, that democracy in this country isn't solid enough for us to be complacent, and that we must strengthen and reinforce it without ceasing. In other words, we must face the political reality that's set before us.

By Kim Jinwoo



Living Science Told in an Accessible Way

Science Concert

Jeong Jae-seung, EastAsia Publishing Co.
2008, 254p, ISBN 978-89-88165-34-9

In 2008, Korea ranked 12th in the world for the number of science and technology research papers published each year. Just as Korea's accelerated development from a wasteland devastated by Japanese colonialism and the Korean War has been called the Miracle on the Han River, Korea has also grown astoundingly in the realm of science. Thanks to the first generation of scientists who had to begin from the ground up, countless third and fourth-generation scientists—those who have studied abroad and at home—are now on the cutting edge of science, rubbing shoulders with the world's top scientists.

During this time, the scientist's field of activity has expanded, and more and more scientists have begun to discuss their areas of expertise in an interesting and accessible way for a general audience. For quite a long time,

the scientific community viewed scientists who wrote popular science as having lost integrity or credibility, but these days, many scientists are diving into the publishing industry to make their names known. So we predict that the scientific publishing landscape in Korea that still prefers foreign, translated material over domestic work, and children and youth science books over thought-provoking scientific papers, will very soon change.

If we are to select the bestselling scientific publication written by a scientist to date, *Science Concert* would be it. First published in 2001 around the time popular science books written by scientists began to draw a lot of attention, this book was widely acclaimed, especially when it was selected as part of a recommended reading list for a broadcasting company's book campaign.

In July 2008, the 33rd edition of *Science Concert* was published, setting the record for the most reprints of a science book. And naturally, the reason for this success is the book's content.

Author Jeong Jae-seung wrote this book while he worked as a postdoctoral researcher at Yale University. This young scientist is currently a professor of bioneurology at his alma mater, the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), a place considered to be a university for science geniuses. Thanks to this book, he has published many other books and makes frequent appearances on TV programs.

Jeong's unique interests are probably what make his books successful. As a science high school student and a student of physics at KAIST, Jeong was interested in film, music, literature, and philosophy, and dreamed of one day becoming a scientist very much in touch with the world. He considers his broad, as well as deep cultural education and experience, as his greatest assets. In a sometimes lighthearted and sometimes serious manner, he explains complex scientific theories and concepts, such as chaos theory, fractal geometry, network science, and statistical physics through stories like "The Science of Murphy's Law," "The Common Pattern in Successful Music," "Complicated Traffic Physics," and "The Financial Engineer Who Jumped into the Stock Market."

As suggested by the book's subtitle "A Complex World & Crystal Clear Science," the book's biggest success is that as a credible, professional researcher he makes the latest ideas of a "living" science succinct and clear for the average person to understand, rather than merely organizing "dead" scientific material that would most likely appear in an encyclopedia or browser window. *Science Concert* continues to be regarded as the most successful popular science book to be written by a scientist, and is often used as a model for other such works. It seems Jeong has paved the way for many more scientist writers to follow suit, and we look forward to more popular science books that may soon surpass even *Science Concert*.



By Oh Cheol-woo



For a Boy Battling Disease

Up Comes the Round Sun

Chang Kyeong-hue, Munhakdongne Publishing Corp. 2009, 400p
ISBN 978-89-546-0819-0

Heads or tails, a coin is a coin. No coin has two sides exactly the same. When placed on a palm, only one side of a coin can be seen. You can always turn it over, but not many people bother. They are too busy counting the coins to worry about heads or tails. Heads and tails are, in fact, different, but the two have exactly the same value. The price of an object does not change according to heads or tails. Still, the two sides of a coin is an analogy that shows how there can be different shapes with the same value.

This work lets us see both sides of the coin. It is a masterpiece that truly shows us how both sides have the same value. The book takes its title and text from the children's song "Up Comes the Round Sun," the very first song that children in Korea learn when they go to kindergarten or elementary school. Going something like, "Up comes the round sun, up from his bed... Wash your face nice and clean, we're brushed and combed, we're all ready... Say goodbye and let's go," the song ends cheerfully with the children merrily going to kindergarten. It encourages children to get ready for school in the morning by themselves.

The prosaic tune takes on eye-popping dimensions coupled with the author's illustrations. At the beginning it is morning, but the room is still dark. A lone bulb hanging from the ceiling illuminates the cramped room. Outside, the round sun is already up in the sky. The protagonist Jin-woo is poor and lives in a basement room, so morning there is a little different from other houses. But Jin-woo yawns just the same as other children and wants

to snuggle into the blankets instead of getting up, the same as everyone else. The juxtaposition of sameness and difference continues.

Jin-woo cannot brush his teeth or wash his face by himself. His mother has to do it for him. The other children pictured on the right, however, wash and brush by themselves. Not like Jin-woo. The look of excitement on their faces at the prospect of going out is just the same, though.

The author never says why Jin-woo is different. Sharp readers may have caught on, but only at the last scene is our curiosity solved in a few lines. Jin-woo has a muscular disease that forces him to spend most of his time at home, in bed. The author uses yellow as bright as the sun to depict Jin-woo's life. She also says that she dedicates this book to "Someone out there battling the unthinkable, but who still knows how to smile." At the end of the book the reader now understands how Jin-woo spends his day battling his disease. We also realize that he has the same goals as us, that his life means just as much, and that his passion for life may be even greater. He may not be able to go to kindergarten, but his glowing face says it all as he sits in a field of sunflowers with his mother, gazing at the sun.

This is the Grand Prize winner of the 9th Seoul Children's Illustration Competition, an annual competition that has run from 1999 to 2009. The author captivated the discerning eyes of a panel that awarded only three Grand

Prizes in 10 years. Looking at the pictures of Jin-woo, you cannot help but smile with him. You feel like you are holding his hand; the pictures are that alive. The book's daringly juxtaposes paradoxical illustrations and text, and its wholesome depiction of character, show that this is one newcomer to watch out for.

By Kim Ji-eun



A Boy Reconciling with the World

The Divine Bicycle Tour

Kim Nam-jung

Changbi Publishers, Inc, 2009, 229p

ISBN 978-89-364-4250-7



Most coming of age books deal with teenagers on the road to adulthood who grow spiritually through their conflicts and friendships with their friends, parents, and siblings. A few novels deal with adventures that help teenagers look at the world through new eyes; *The Divine Bicycle Tour* is one such novel.

The plot of this story is rather simple. It begins with a boy's parents' conflict. He feels lonely and runs away from home. After going through a series of hardships, he learns many things and reconciles with his parents. While this kind of storyline is common in coming of age novels, what makes this story stand out is that this is told like a road journey. Hojin, the protagonist, joins 10 other people for a 12-day, 1100 km long bicycle tour. As he shares the pain and the pleasure of the journey, the author shows how the 13-year-old boy becomes more aware of the world and reconciles with his parents.

Sixth grader Hojin is a very sensitive child. One day, he overhears his parents arguing about getting divorced. Hojin immediately runs away from home. He calls his uncle and takes a train to his uncle's city. When Hojin arrives, he finds his uncle

preparing for a bicycle tour with nine other people. At the spur of the moment, Hojin becomes the 11th member.

Their tight schedule covers six cities under a scorching sun. In the course of the tour, Hojin becomes friends with the other tour members: a teenager who once had no friends, a patient in the final stages of cancer, an alcoholic, a jobless person, and a fussy 20-something lady. While talking with them, Hojin realizes that everyone has problems just like him. While climbing the hills together and consoling each other, Hojin is able to forget his worries.

The day the group climbs the highest, toughest hill, Hojin finally realizes what his and his parents' problem was. An idea occurs to him on how to help them reconcile: to suggest that they go on a bicycling trip. Hojin calls his mother and father separately and asks them to do him a secret favor. Will Hojin's family become happy once again?

The author is a bicycling maniac who hits the road for extended bicycle tours a couple times a year. Maybe that is why he could vividly describe the riders' feelings of joy and anger. This book is recommended for 4th to 6th graders who have concerns like the protagonist.

By Oh Yunhyun

away?" may look like a crumpled-up child's drawing, but she could also be the child herself.

The tearful face of the castaway doll, Mimi, goes straight to your heart from the first page. The following pages, however, feature the unrepentantly zany confessions of nine abandoners. There is the pianist who throws his piano away because playing it lowers his spirits, the inventor who throws away spare parts because he can't be bothered to fix old machines anymore, the designer who throws away all of her square- and triangle-patterned cloth to make clothes themed on circles. Their reasons for abandonment are not for some immoral purpose or selfish profit. Be it impulsive or deliberate, they abandon because they painstakingly listen to their thoughts and feelings. Do they feel better, or do they feel worse for it?

While reading this book that starts from the perspective of the abandoned and moves on to that of the abandoner, the questions surrounding abandonment seem deeper than ever. The author Goh Gyong-sook, recipient of the Ragazzi Award at the 2006 Bologna Children's Book Fair, uses primary colors and dramatic collages. Her influences include Russian constructivism. The entire book can be folded and unfolded, adding to both reading and tactile pleasure. This is a real keeper of a picture book for children aged five years and older.

By Kim Ji-eun

Who Threw Me Away?

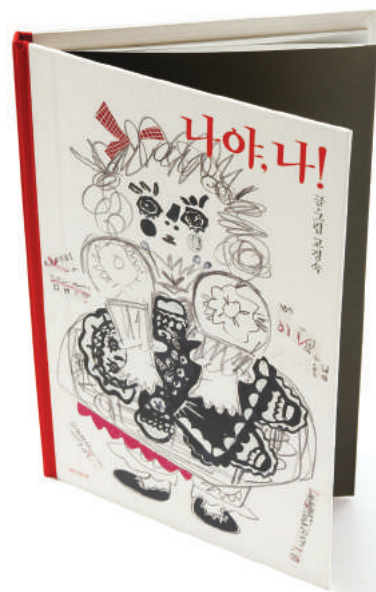
Who?

Goh Gyong-sook, Jaimimage Publishing Co., 2009, 13p

ISBN 978-89-86565-86-7

Imagine you have been abandoned by someone. Of course first you would have a good cry, but then you would start thinking. Why was I abandoned? Was it my fault, or was it their fault? Will I ever be loved again? Did that person have the right to abandon me?

One of the most frightening childhood nightmares is that of being abandoned by your parents. The pain of abandonment is a classic theme in children's literature. What sets this book apart, however, is that the voices of not only the abandoned, but the abandoners, are represented. Mimi, the doll who demands to know "Who threw me



Adventures of a Little Dust Monster

The Dust Monster, Duspy

Yi Yeon-sil; Photographer: Kim Hyangsoo
Hansol Education, 2009, 36p
ISBN 978-89-535-5983-7



Sometimes there are stories hidden in the most unlikely places. People pass over the unseen, so the story goes unnoticed. But the joy of stumbling upon just such a story is unimaginable.

The Dust Monster, Duspy tells of the hidden antics of a humble dustball. Dust falling through cracks in the floor or blowing behind bookshelves softly piles up into little dust hills, while we remain unaware. Hidden nooks and crannies untouched by human hands are where dust reigns. Duspy is a little monster that makes his home there. The dust hills are usually quiet, but sometimes a commotion is caused by a small object dropping into their midst. It might be someone's treasure box, or perhaps the button of a favorite garment. Duspy takes these back to their homes, carefully depositing them near their owners. Nothing pleases Duspy more than the delight of the owners when they exclaim, 'Oh, there it is!' As long as people keep losing things, Duspy is one busy monster.

The author Yi Yeon-sil's aesthetic embraces both the East and the West. The muted browns and grays of the patches used to make Duspy are representative of

the calm, reserved Eastern palette. Yet the use of dramatic close-ups and the compact presentation hint at a surrealist aesthetic. Yi Yeon-sil studied art in Seoul and also at the Royal Art Institutes of France and Belgium. The photography is by Kim Hyangsoo, whose photographs are also featured in *Cloud Bread*, a book that garnered its creator Back Heena the title of "Illustrator of the Year" at the 2005 Bologna Children's Book Fair. Born after four years of hard work and more than 100 edits, Duspy has already gained international acclaim with rights sold in six countries.

By Kim Ji-eun

Insight into Petroleum

Black Tears, Petroleum

Kim Sungho, Mirae Media & Books, Co., 2009, 170p
ISBN 978-89-8394-551-8

We could not live a single day without petroleum. We cannot go anywhere without using a car or an airplane, which are fueled by petroleum. We cannot use computers or rice cookers without gas or electricity, which are produced from petroleum. These are a few examples of how petroleum is closely entwined in our daily lives. But not many of us know much about it. At most, we know that we dig up petroleum from the desert or the seabed and use it as energy to make cars or machines run.

Black Tears, Petroleum is an insightful, easy to understand book about petroleum. This book shows not just what it is composed of and how it is refined, but also about how its price is determined, why the increase of the petroleum price affects the prices of commodities, why there are oil crises, what happens if petroleum leaks in the ocean, what alternative energy we will use when petroleum is dried up, and so on. The author guides us through the importance

of petroleum with stories about politics, economics, society, culture, and history.

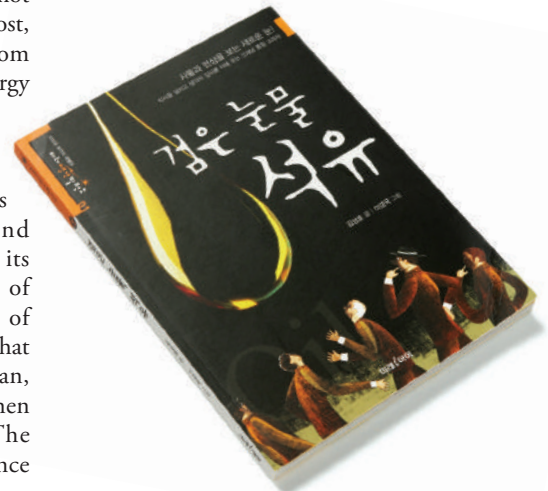
One of the surprising facts regarding petroleum is that it has been a factor in every war since the 18th century. The author declares that where there was petroleum, there were wars. This is why he calls petroleum "black tears," not "black gold."

In fact, there were many tragic events in the petroleum-related wars. The German attack on Romania, which became the starting point of World War II, began with Germany's desire to dominate the Ploiesti oil fields. Japan's attack on Manchuria via the Korean peninsula, the First and the Second Gulf Wars, and the recent wars in Iraq began for the same reason.

The book discusses another problem related to petroleum: environmental destruction. According to the author, Earth is facing a crisis because of the carbon dioxide that is produced from burning petroleum or natural gas. For the last hundred years, the average temperature of the earth has increased by 1.6 centigrade, the sea level has risen 23 cm, and 15 percent of the glaciers have melted. Fortunately, alternative energies such as wind power and solar power, which will replace petroleum in the near future, do not produce such dangerous by-products.

The author has worked as a securities dealer at a financial institute, which is probably why he specifically focused on issues such as different countries' interests in petroleum and the relation of petroleum to the price of commodities. This book is highly recommended for teenagers who want to understand issues such as war and alternative energies.

By Oh Yunhyun



Life and Death Are One

If You Live, I Live Too

Choi Eunyoung; Illustrator: Choi Jung-in
Urikyoyuk Co., Ltd., 2009, 170p
ISBN 978-89-8040-861-0



A Korean proverb says, “While there’s a sequence for us to come in to this world, there’s no sequence to leave it.” Children, also human beings, are not free from death. However, most children think they will not die. Though children are exposed to death everyday on the news and in movies or video games, it is not easy to have an honest conversation about death with them. Still, we must talk about it because taking death seriously means taking life seriously.

Donating organs might be one of the most touching things that connect life and death. Donating offers the chance for a new life to someone, but it is based on the fact that someone else has to die. Generally, people consider organ donations to be the last good deed of the dying person. However, *If You Live, I Live Too*, which won the 5th Urikyoyuk Children’s Literature Author Award, offers a new philosophy on donating organs: death is a part of life.

After a car accident, Gunho, a young boy, becomes brain-dead. His soul left his body and floated around the hospital. He was neither dead nor alive, and he felt frustrated because he did not know why. He accidentally met an old woman,

also a patient in the hospital, who could communicate with spirits like himself. Through the old woman he learned about a boy named Hyungwoo, whose brother was battling a serious heart disease. With the help of these two, Gunho was able to reflect on his life. His family had not been open with each other because of ongoing family problems. He came to understand them and was able to make peace with them. Finally, he was able to meet a peaceful end. His body and soul changed form and continue to live on through an organ transplant in Hyungwoo’s brother. The conclusion, in which one death offered two people new lives and the deceased lives on in the memories of the hearts of the living, leaves a deep impression. The odd, old woman who is able to console vengeful spirits adds an interesting layer and the sympathy between the boys helps keep the dark and heavy tone light and touching.

By Park Suk-kyoung

Bringing the Cool Back to Reading

Youngdu’s Accidental Reality

Lee Hyun, Sakyajul Publishing Ltd., 2009, 210p
ISBN 978-89-5828-353-9

The short stories published in this collection are like models in a prêt-à-porter fashion show of Korea’s young-adult fiction. The author, Lee Hyun, has a journalist’s keen eye for capturing the era’s trends. Teenagers won’t even glance at something if it isn’t cool, so it is not so easy to talk to them through literature. Lee simply presents them with cool stories and seems to be able to talk with young adults, not preach to them. She ceaselessly rises to the task and obtains successful results.

Youngdu’s Accidental Reality, the title story of this collection, is about a double life based on the parallel universe theory. Though unfamiliar and confusing, like the movie *The Matrix*, this story’s theme is

fascinating and provides a pleasurable read.

The collection includes five other great stories: in “Red Traffic Light,” a boy who raped his girlfriend defends himself by saying that he loves her; in “Roswell Warning,” a girl escapes her boring, daily life thanks to the arrival of alien creatures; in “An Unreturned Love,” a high school girl who knows everything from A to Z about love theories is actually as timid as a rabbit when it comes to her own love for a boy; in “What He Had Left Behind,” the poor have no right to be sad about the loss of their family members; and “Hope to Win With the Wrong Answers” is a report on contemporary teenagers with strong personalities who feel no fear expressing their political opinions.

Through humor, science fiction, surprising twists, ironic criticism on the polarization of society, and a passionate pursuit for political rightness, this book is like a magazine or a talk show about Korean teenagers in the new millennium. This collection of short stories is full of new challenges and is, for sure, one of the hottest books in Korean young adult fiction today. High school students or anyone who is interested in the true characters of Korean teenagers will find this book interesting.

By Park Suk-kyoung



Children Overcome Loneliness the Far Eastern Way

Oseam, a Small Buddhist Temple

Jung Chae-bong, Changbi Publishers, Inc., 2008, 200p
ISBN 978-89-364-4019-0

Jung Chae-bong was one of the great innovators of Korean children's literature from the 1980s to 1990s. He expanded the scope of children's stories from everyday life to the realm of philosophical and religious experience. *Oseam* collects the best of the author's short works. First published in 1983, it remains a steady seller with hundreds of thousands of copies sold to date. While Jung Chae-bong grew up in a Confucian household, as an adult he became a Catholic who was also learned in Buddhism, maintaining close ties with Zen masters such as Monk Seongcheol and Monk Beopjeong. The richness of his religious life is apparent in his work. Nuns

and Buddhist monks are favorite characters, and many of the stories occur in Buddhist temples or are inspired by Buddhist lore. His Confucian roots are visible in the strong sense of family and motherly love that also feature prominently in his work.

The young protagonists of Jung Chae-bong's work are mostly a cheeky bunch. They speak their minds, undeterred by adults. From time to time they pester the adults around them by asking the most unanswerable, deeply philosophical questions, because their intuitive curiosity knows no bounds. The adults, however, struggle to find rational answers to these questions. The winners are usually the

children, for children are those who are relatively free from secular interest or prejudice. The author called this the power of the child's heart. His young characters often have conversations with adults that resemble Zen questions. This has drawn criticism that they are too hard for children and that children are not that mature. However, the author firmly believed that children think for themselves. Taking the process of growth as his theme, he focused on the establishment of the self in the spiritual aspect of growth.

Jung liked to use Eastern symbols such as the Buddha, clouds, and the moon, and his lyrical style that presents a clear picture of the human heart captivated numerous readers. He continued to write books for children and young adults, and poetry until his death in 2001 at the age of 55, after battling cancer for years. The entirety of his work has been recently published in 29 volumes by Samtoh Co., Ltd. *Bird from the Water* has been translated into German and *Oseam* into French, the latter has also been remade into a film, an animated film, and a television series in Korea.

The main characters of his signature story, "Oseam," are the blind Gami and her little scamp of a brother, Gilseon. The brother and sister are orphan vagabonds. One day they come upon a temple deep in the mountains, where a monk looks after them. The children, however, are able to see and hear things that the monk cannot. Eventually Gilseon is trapped in the mountains by a freak snowstorm, where he dies after gaining "the eye of the heart," a state of enlightenment unattainable by adults. The temple where he stayed is named "Oseam" after him, as in where a five-year-old ('O' is five in Korean) achieved nirvana and became a buddha.

There are many children like Gilseon in Jung's work. Children who have grown up early are lonely. Their friends are the mountains, the fields, and the wind. In Jung Chae-bong's stories we can read how children overcome loneliness in the most Eastern way. This, of course, is merely the beginning of the astonishing insights offered by this remarkable author.

By Kim Ji-eun





Minumsa

Discovering New Writers and Introducing World Literature to Korea

Minumsa, a publisher with a 43-year history, started out by publishing general literature and books on culture, and has played a key role in discovering outstanding literature from home and abroad.

They reestablished themselves as a comprehensive publishing group in the 1990s, and have since expanded into all fields of publication, including children's books, books on science, the economy, and the arts.

민음사

Minumsa, a major publisher in Korea, opened its doors in 1966. The word “minum” means “carrying the honest voice of the people,” and embodies the spirit of Director Park Maeng-ho, the founder of the company, whose goal was to issue books that conveyed the voice of the people under the military dictatorship at the time. Minumsa, which started out by publishing general literature and books on culture, has expanded into all fields of publication, including the children's book genre, books on science, the economy, and culture, and has now established itself as Korea's second largest publisher in terms of volume.

From its inception, Minumsa has focused its efforts on discovering outstanding works by young writers. Through the series, *Today's Poets*, which was launched in 1974, and the Today's Writer Award, the publisher opened the gateway for new writers to publish their works.



Such ventures were unprecedented in those days, when it was extremely difficult for new writers to publish their works, and it was through such efforts that Korean literature suddenly regained its youth. *The Big Root* by Kim Soo-young, *Resurrection* by Ko Un, and *Snow Falling over the Three Southern Provinces* by Hwang Dong-gyu, among other works, were published through the *Today's Poets Series*. In addition, works such as *Son of Man* by Yi Mun-yol, *Marriage Is a Crazy Thing* by Lee Mangyo, and *A Life in Roses* by Jung Mi-kyung, have been recognized through the Today's Writer Award. Yi Mun-yol has established himself as a master of Korean literature, and his works, including *The Poet, For the Emperor*, and *Our Twisted Hero*, have been introduced to Europe and the United States to positive responses. *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, a Chinese classic in 10 volumes annotated by Yi Mun-yol, and *Water Margin*, also in 10 volumes, have become steady sellers in Korea. A total of 18 million copies of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* have been sold in Korea. Minumsa has also published other works such as *The Road to the Race Track*, *The Republic of Uzupis* by Hailji, and *The Immortal Yi Sun-sin* by Kim Takhwan.

Most recently, Minumsa has been experimenting with the revitalization of full-length novels, and reprinting some full-length novels by young writers in *World Literature*, a literary quarterly. Through such efforts, long novels by remarkable young writers, such as Kim Eseol, Lee Hong, and Hwang Jungeun, have been published.

Minumsa continues to respond with sensitivity to the changes in the era, and cultivate new territories. In 1996, the publisher founded Golden Bough Publishing Co., Ltd., a publishing brand which specializes in genre literature, and led the effort in introducing to Korea outstanding genre literature from abroad, and discovering new writers in the field of genre literature in Korea, which, in the past, was almost nonexistent. *Dragon Raja*, a fantasy novel by Lee Yeongdo and a major piece of work in this field, has been published in various Asian countries, including Japan, China, and Taiwan. Minumsa also continues to publish compilations of works by Korean writers, such as *Short Korean Mystery Stories* and *Short Korean Horror Stories*, and introduce major works by writers from abroad.

From the days of its foundation, Minumsa has continued to have an interest in international literary exchanges.

Through the *World Poets Series*, launched in 1972, collections of poetry by Apollinaire and Rainer Maria Rilke, among others, have been published. The quarterly *World Literature*, launched in 1976, made its way into the quarterly journal market, holding up global literary exchanges as its mark of distinction. Writers such as Milan Kundera and Orhan Pamuk have been introduced to Korea through *World Literature*, as well as the writings of theoreticians, such as Deleuze, Foucault, and Derrida. *The Complete Works of World Literature*, which was launched in 1998, includes 223 volumes as of today, and is deemed the most representative works of world literature in Korea, with an outstanding selection and high-quality translations.

In the 1990s, Minumsa reestablished

itself as a comprehensive publishing group, with subsidiary publishers including BIR Publishing Co., Ltd., a publisher of children's books; ScienceBooks, a publisher specializing in science books; The Golden Compass, a publisher of economic management and nonfiction books; Semicolon, a publisher of art and design books; and Mineum-in, a publisher of books on humanities and culture, through which it continues its work as a publishing powerhouse.

By Lee Yeong-gyeong
(reporter for *The Kyunghyang Shinmun*)



1. *Chohanji*
Yi Mun-yol, 2008, 308p
ISBN 978-89-374-8167-3
2. *The Immortal Yi Sun-sin*
Kim Takhwan, 2004, 348
ISBN 978-89-827-3686-5
3. *Madame Bovary*
Gustave Flaubert, 2000, 558p
ISBN 978-89-374-6036-4
4. *Pride and Prejudice*
Jane Austen, 2009, 560p
ISBN 978-89-374-6088-3
5. *Kiss of the Spider Woman*
Manuel Puig, 2000, 396p
ISBN 978-89-374-6037-1



Bear Books

Specializing in Picture Books

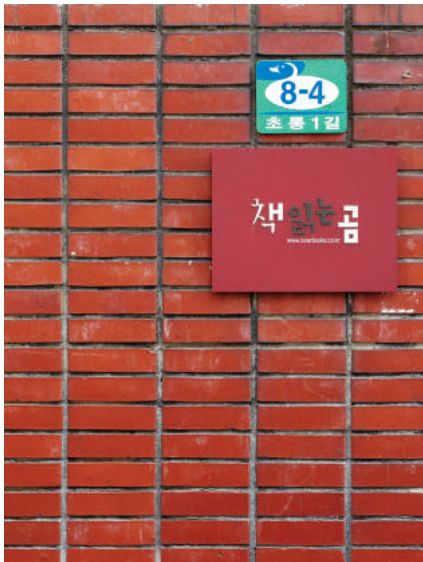
It may be small, but Bear Books has already distinguished itself as a publishing company with a unique approach and vision. Even its name has been selected with the goal of engaging with children, in hopes that Bear Books can become an honest and loyal friend to every child.

Korea's picture book industry has seen many changes since its rise in 1988. At that time professional illustrators appeared on the scene, whereas previously, artists from different disciplines had illustrated children's books. An increasing number of publishing houses also began to place greater importance on picture books. As recently as 20 years ago, there were less than 10 publishers of children's books, but the numbers more than tripled during the 1990s. Another unique characteristic of this industry is that currently, the editors and illustrators of picture books are young. These key people help carve out a fresh and distinct identity for Korea's picture books, as well as promote the exchange of ideas and approaches with other countries around the world.

Although fairly young, Bear Books was birthed in this climate with a distinct voice and vision. The fact that it is the sole publisher specializing in children's picture and illustrated books out of over a 100 publishers devoted to children's literature, is a tremendous feat. In reality, most publishers do not exclusively publish children's picture books because it does not seem wise to focus on such a specific and specialized genre from a business point of view. In fact, it is extremely difficult to survive with this kind of unique objective amongst a host of large and stable publishing houses.

However, Lim Sunhee, a representative of Bear Books, speaks confidently about this situation: "We may be a small publishing house, but our passion and amazing teamwork more than make up for our small size. We know picture books because it's what we do and it's what we've done for a long time. Every staff member here has extensive experience in picture book editing. That's why we're able to have such a clear company philosophy."

Since the company's inception in 2007, half of its 24 publications have been picture books. The reason that the number of original picture books, which require a great deal of time and money as opposed to translated picture books, is as high as half of their publication list, is because of the staff's boundless enthusiasm and dedication. The publishing house's general atmosphere is open, constructive, and harmonious, and



Bear Books



Inside Bear Books

the format of discussions is flexible, so that every staff member is encouraged to speak freely about each scheduled book. Just like Bear Books' work atmosphere, their picture books have retained the essential cultural identity of Korea without being rigid. This is evidence that Bear Books is making a great effort to understand children who are the main readers of these books, for it is much more concerned about children's ultimate satisfaction rather than the individual concerns of its adult writers and editors. While fulfilling children's desires continues to be a constant target, an ongoing struggle is how to better portray contemporary culture in picture books. In order to find a solution, editors collaborate with writers, listen to their feedback and suggestions, and through this process, recreate material that deals with history from a fresh and original perspective.

Traditional narratives are very important to Korean picture books and dozens of old tales and myths are released every season. Traditional lore has the capacity to be both fascinating and accessible, and Bear Books creates books using this same duality. The recently released *Super-Doooper Firefighters* is one of these books where Bear Books has taken a tale that could have easily felt outdated and injected it with a sense of contemporary modern sensibilities and rhythms.

Every time Bear Books attempts something vibrant and fresh, the horizon of Korean picture books seems to broaden, and as this happens, we are certain that the number of young readers will also increase.

By Jeoung Byung-kyu
(director of Heyri Donghwanara)

1. *Little Yeoni's New Year's Greetings*
Woo Ji-young; Illustrator: Yoon Jungjoo
2007, 34p, ISBN 978-89-9-601701-1

2. *Super-Doooper Firefighters*
Ko Seunghyun; Illustrator: Yoon Jungjoo
2009, 32p, ISBN 978-89-9-324216-4

3. *A Day with My Grandpa in Gangneung Danoje*
Lee Sunwon; Illustrator: Choi Hyunmook,
2008, 30p, ISBN 978-89-9-324201-0

4. *Gauri's Family Makes Soy Sauce*
Lee Gyuhee; Illustrator: Sin Minjae
2008, 33p, ISBN 978-89-9-324205-8



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5. *Albert*
Lani Yamamoto; Translator: Boo Sooyoung
2008, 25p, ISBN 978-89-9-601708-0

6. *The Day When Mommy Became the Mommy*
(Okaasanga Okaasanni natta Hi)
Hideko Nagano; Translator, 2009, 32p
ISBN 978-89-9-601709-7

7. *Art's Supplies*
Chris Tougas; Translator: Park Soohyun
2008, 32p, ISBN 978-89-9-324206-5

8. *My First Errend (Otsukai Shinkansen)*
Iwao Fukuda; Translator: Han Young
2009, 32p, ISBN 978-89-9-324215-7

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Translating Korea

The doors to the library of the Hermit Kingdom have been thrown open to French readers. Special dozens of works of Korean literature have been already translated into French, and some publishers are steadily introducing Korean books to France. In most decently sized bookstores in France, Korean books can be found not tucked between books from “Asia” but on their own shelf devoted to “Korea.” This is an encouraging sign for the status of Korean books abroad.

Of course, there are still difficulties. When books from Korea are translated, information has to be provided to enable western readers to understand the content. Translators must be especially careful not to intervene between readers and the text, while ensuring that the “Korean-ness” of these works is not lost. Also, if French readers are to experience the same pleasure and emotion from these texts as Korean readers, then co-translation with a native French speaker is a must in order to preserve not only the nuanced meaning of each sentence but the musicality of the language. In addition, there is the problem of having to reproduce cultural references and allusions within the text. The many small relationships to other works that are referenced within the work are responsible for an important part of the meaning coming from the home culture: its history and folklore, its classic literature, and its turbulent modernity. It is through this kind of intertextuality that literary works come to accommodate part of the “library” of their home country. However, when these works are translated, there is always the risk that the intertextual backdrop that makes these texts so rich with meaning will disappear, leaving behind a lonely, lower quality work.

How are we to remedy this? First, we must not stop translating. The more Korean books are translated and claim a wider space in French bookstores, and the more French readers come to understand Korea, the thicker the web of intertextual connections will grow, and as a result, new translations will be able to more faithfully reproduce their originals. Also, we must re-translate. We must do so in order for previous translations to make use of these newly constructed webs of intertextuality. Also, we must translate into several languages, even seemingly peripheral ones, to avoid Korean images being given through a single culture.

One day, we will realize that an unexpected change has come upon us. Through the efforts of writers and translators and all cultural creators, Korea will have acquired fame and symbolic “capital” in the world market of cultural goods. Then, Korea will move a little closer to the center of that galaxy made up of countless languages and cultures. That day is not far off.

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list

Books from Korea

A Quarterly Magazine for Publishers

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