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ADAM MICKIEWICZ UNIVERSITY, POZNAŃ, POLAND

https://pressto.amu.edu.pl/index.php/kr
koreanhumanities@gmail.com

Editorial Office
International Journal of Korean Humanities and Social Sciences
Faculty of Modern Languages and Literatures
Adam Mickiewicz University
al. Niepodległości 4,
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koreanhumanities@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION OF POST-ECOLOGICAL POETRY

Dong Eok Park, Research Professor
Institute for Korean Christianity Culture
Soongsil University, Korea
369 Sangdo-ro, Dongjak-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea
ssusuncanon@ssu.ac.kr

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0006-1087-1864

Abstract: This paper explores contemporary Korean poetry through two distinct ecological perspectives. First, it reflects on the anthropocentrism inherent in conventional ecological poetry. Second, it investigates the potential for a post-ecological poetry that transcends this anthropocentrism.
Traditional nature poetry aims to address ecological concerns but often relies on an anthropocentric perspective shaped by human-centered views. This tendency reduces nature to an aesthetic and comforting entity for human consumption. Despite the poet's sincere ecological intentions, ecological poetry often risks emphasizing the poet's ethical superiority rather than fostering a deeper connection with nature.

In contrast, poets like Kim Hye-soon (김혜순) and Heo Soo-kyung (허수경) have acknowledged the limitations of conventional ecological poetry and experimented with new poetic forms by incorporating hybrid perspectives, blending human and non-human voices, and addressing ecological issues through innovative structures and metaphors. This paper defines their works as post-ecological poetry and seeks to examine the significance of these creations.

Keywords: Modern Poetry, Ecology, Ecology Poetry, Post-Ecology, Post-Humanism, Kim Hye-soon, Heo Soo-kyung

포스트생태시 입문

초록: 이 논문은 현대 한국 시를 두 가지 뚜렷한 생태적 관점에서 탐구한다. 첫째, 기존 생태시가 내포하고 있는 인간중심주의를 성찰한다. 둘째, 이러한 인간중심주의를 초월하는 포스트생태시의 가능성을 모색한다.

전통적인 자연시는 생태적 문제를 다루고자 하지만, 종종 인간 중심적 관점에 의해 형성된 시각에 의존한다. 이러한 경향은 자연을 인간에게 미적이고 위안을 주는 대상으로 축소시킨다. 시인의 생태적 의도에도 불구하고, 전통적인 자연시는 자연과의 깊은 연대를 도모하기보다는 시인의 윤리적 우월성을 강조하는 위험에 빠질 수 있다.

이에 반해 김혜순과 허수경과 같은 시인들은 기존 생태시의 한계를 인식하고, 인간과 비인간의 목소리를 혼합하거나 생태적 문제를 독창적인 구조와 은유를 통해 탐구하는 하이브리드적 관점을 시도함으로써 새로운 시 형식을 실험해왔다. 이 논문은 이들의 작품을 포스트생태시로 정의하며, 이 창작물들의 의미를 분석하고자 한다.

키워드: 현대시, 생태주의, 생태시, 포스트생태주의, 포스트휴머니즘, 김혜순, 허수경

1. Introduction

The following is an example of an ecological poem worth examining. Lee Seong-seon (이성선, January 2, 1941 – May 4, 2001),[1] a profes-

[1] Lee Seong-sun (李聖善; January 2, 1941 – May 4, 2001) was a celebrated poet born in Goseong, Gangwon Province. Coming from a prosperous farming family, his early life was stable, but it took a dramatic turn when his father defected to the North during the 1·4 retreats, leaving him to be raised by his single mother. His upbringing in Sokcho Middle School and High School paved the way for his admission to Korea University's agricultural department in 1961, where he graduated in 1967.

Initially delving into agricultural science, Lee briefly studied beans in a crop test class at the Rural Development Administration. However, his career trajectory shifted as he became a teacher at Donggwang High School, near his hometown. While teaching, he pursued advanced studies, earning a master's degree in Korean Language Education at Korea University Graduate School of Education in 1987. Lee wore many hats during his career, serving as an adjunct professor of literary creation at Soongsil University, a standing member of the Korean Poets Association, co-chair of the Sokcho, Yangyang, and Goseong Environmental Movement Association, and director of the Wonju Land Literature Museum.

Lee's poetic journey saw two significant debuts. In 1969, he founded the "Seorak Munwoohoe (*설악문우회*)." A year later, he debuted formally in Culture Criticism (*문화비평*) with four works, including "The Poet's Folding Screen" (*시인의 병풍*). His re-debut in 1972 through Poetry Literature (*시문학*) cemented his literary presence. Over his career, Lee authored 13 poetry collections, which were later compiled and published in two comprehensive editions.

Poetry *Poet's Folding Screen 시인의 병풍* (Hyundai-Munhaksa, 1974), *With A Knock On The Sky's Door 하늘문을 두드리며* (Jeon Ye-won, 1977), *Body Is Tied To The Ground 몸은 지상에 묶여도* (Si-insa, 1979), *Rope 밧줄* (Changwonsa, 1982) *A Child Dreaming Of Being A Poet 시인을 꿈꾸는 아이* (Yul Do-guk, 1997) *My tree to your tree 나의 나무가 너의 나무에게* (Oh Sang-sa, 1985) *A Starry Roof 별이 비치는 지붕* (Jeon Ye-won, 1987), *별까지 가면 된다* (Goryuwon, 1988) *Dawn Flower Scent 새벽꽃향기* (Munhaksasangsa, 1989) *Scent Night 향기나는 밤* (Jeonwon, 1991) *The Climax of a Song 절정의 노래* (Changjakgwa-Bipyungsa, 1991) *A Bug Poet 벌레 시인* (Goryuwon, 1994) *Mountain Poetry 산시* (Siwa-sihaksa, 1999 *The Universe Put a Hand on My Body 내 몸에 우주가 손을 얹었다* (Segyesa, 2000) Collection *Lee Seong-seon's Poetry Collection* (Siwa-Sihaksa, 2005) *Lee Seong-seon's Poetry Collection 1st and 2nd* (Seojeong Sihaksa, 2011)

sor of creative writing at Soongsil University (崇實大學校), centered his entire literary career around the theme of communicating with nature. His ecological awareness extended beyond poetry and into real-life activism. Since July 1995, he actively participated in establishing local branches of the Environmental Movement Union[2] in Sokcho (속초), Yangyang (양양), and Goseong (고성) later serving as the union's co-chair. Consequently, Lee's research and creative works were deeply rooted in the regional and ecological contexts of places like Goseong and Sokcho, where he spent most of his life. His poetry reflects a profound natural consciousness that forms the core of his work.

Tree.

You are a temple.

There's a sound of wood crackling in you.

after it's cleared up

Looking at your shadow in the water

I'll stand upside down and open up another world.

From you on your way.

[2] The Korean Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM) is a South Korean environmental advocacy group established in April 1993. Its origins can be traced back to the Pollution Elimination Movement Coalition, which was formed in 1988 by the "Citizens' Movement Council Against Pollution" and the "Youth Council for Pollution Elimination Movement." KFEM was founded with the goal of creating a grassroots environmental movement driven by increased civic participation, especially following the June Uprising. Today, KFEM operates 54 regional branches across the country and represents South Korea as the official affiliate of Friends of the Earth, a globally recognized environmental organization. Much like the interconnected branches of a tree spreading outward, KFEM's network has grown to touch communities nationwide, advocating for sustainable practices and ecological awareness.

I can hear the blooming of flowers.

I can hear the sound of a butterfly flying.

The pain of laying new eggs is reflected.

a cloud flower blooming on four branches

Playing while eating star flowers...

fish

the quivering whispers of the universe

Inside you, I hear.

the sound of a mountain walking.

Looking at you, I see again.

upside down in the water

A monk on his way to chant

(Lee Seong-seon 이성선, 1985: 39)[3]

The poet's work can be understood as a form of what might be called Buddhist ecology (Son Jin-eun 손진은 2020: 263). It is evident that the poet projects Buddhist concepts onto nature. For instance, in the poem titled "Temple in a Tree," (나무 안의 절) the natural landscape is likened to a Temple (절), a chanting (염불), and

[3] "나무야/ 너는 하나의 절이다./ 네 안에서 목탁소리가 난다./ 비 갠 후/ 물 속 네 그림자를 바라보면/ 거꾸로 서서 또 한 세계를 열어 놓고/ 가고 있는 너에게서/ 꽃 피는 소리 들린다./ 나비 날아가는 소리 들린다./ 새 알 낳는 고통이 비친다./ 네 가지에 피어난 구름꽃/ 별꽃 뜯어먹으며 노니는/ 물고기들/ 떨리는 우주의 속삭임/ 네 안에서 나는 듣는다./ 산이 걸어가는 소리/ 너를 보며 나는 또 본다./ 물 속을 거꾸로/ 염불 외고 가는 한 스님 모습." (Lee Seong-sun 이성선, 1985: 39)

"A monk on his way to chant." In this poem, all elements of nature are seen as scriptures or the embodiment of Buddhist law (불법). Observing nature becomes a process through which the poet contemplates unavoidable suffering, such as the "The pain of laying new eggs is reflected" and perceives the movement of the cosmos, like "the quivering whispers of the universe." Thus, it is fitting to describe Lee Seong-seon's perspective as Buddhist ecology(불교생태학), which can be interpreted as "a world of insight that operates in a new and dynamic way, free from a human-centered viewpoint." (Kim Ji-yeon 김지연 2016: 106)

On the one hand, the poem reflects a form of aesthetic contemplation. Even when considered apart from a Buddhist perspective, the poem evokes a sense of calmness in nature. This is because the poetic speaker maintains an aesthetic distance from natural objects, such as "trees." As suggested by verbs like "hear" and "looking," the natural objects in the poem are not meant to be physically touched or interacted with, but rather observed from a contemplative stance. In other words, the speaker does not regard nature as a means of production, as a farmer or entrepreneur might. Instead, nature is merely appreciated for what it is. Here, nature is neither a place of labor nor an object for development. It feels relaxed precisely because it is treated as a subject of observation, without any intention to alter its purpose or properties.

Thus, the nature depicted in this poem is not the "nature at hand" (손 안의 자연) that can be touched and engaged with in everyday life, but the "nature before our eyes" (눈으로 본 자연) as conceptualized in Buddhist philosophy. In this sense, the poem lacks the depiction of nature as a living, breathing entity. Therefore, one could argue that what Lee Seong-sun observes is not truly nature itself, but rather his own thoughts, which are projected onto and compared with nature.

If we take these doubts into consideration, we can see that this poem takes the form of a dialogue. From the very first line, the poem addresses the "Tree," speaking to it directly. The speaker, "I hear," also refers to the tree's reflection on the water as "Inside you,"

using the second person. This approach establishes a form of communication that transcends the distinction between human and tree. For example, in the phrase, "Inside you, I hear." it appears as if the speaker reaches a level of understanding that penetrates the essence of how "you" exist. However, this understanding is not equivalent to human communication. Rather, it reflects a form of shared existence that philosopher Martin Heidegger described as "being." (존재)[4]

Yet, it is important to note that all of these statements belong solely to the poet, not to the tree. This is because verbal expression, at least in the conventional sense, is an ability unique to humans. In this sense, Lee Seong-seon's poetry is more like a monologue disguised as a dialogue. His poems can certainly be considered ecological, but when his poem attempts to create a conversational relationship, we must question in what sense it can truly be called a conversation.

Let's move on to a broader question. Given the inherent limitations of language in literary art, is nature poetry or ecological poetry merely a monologue about nature, or is it a conversation with nature? Is the dialogic form necessary in the creation of natural scriptures? These questions lead us to the concept of controversy. The term "controversy"(쟁론)[5] here refers to the notion of *différend* proposed by French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard (1924–1998). *Différend* signifies a dialogue between two parties who do not possess equal linguistic capabilities—where one has the right to speak, while the other is denied that right. In other words, it describes a forced dialogic situation despite the asymmetry in language skills, resulting in a controversy. Lyotard used this term to critique situa-

[4] "Sharing together is by no means the same as moving an experience, such as an opinion or wish, from the inside of one subject to the inside of another. Being there together [co-present existence] is essentially revealed in understanding as well as being already together." (Martin Heidegger 1998: 223).

[5] "Unlike *litige*, a dispute differentiates would be a case of conflict between (at least) two parties that cannot be fairly resolved due to a lack of judgment rules applicable to both discussions. In this case, one side is justified. *Legitime* does not mean that the other side is unjustified." (Jean-François Lyotard 2015: 9)

tions where a Holocaust denier like Robert Faurisson attempted to rationalize his claims by calling upon victims who perished in the Auschwitz gas chambers as court witnesses. In such a scenario, the very act of attempting to create a dialogue becomes inherently problematic, as it disregards the fundamental imbalance in the ability to speak and be heard.[6]

How can we speak to the other? Lyotard raises this question as follows: "The problem is not to write 'in the second person' according to your own system, but to write to the other according to the laws of the other." (Jean-Francois Lyotard 2015: 207). In a similar vein, in modern times, the question becomes how nature can be engaged with as a true other, respecting the laws of nature itself.

Thus, I would like to apply the term "controversy" to the genre of nature poetry. The aim of this article is to reconsider the genre known as nature poetry and, if possible, to explore the norms of a genre that could be called "ecological poetry." The question is this: Ecological poetry places nature in the position of a witness, but nature, in its own right, cannot testify within the framework of ecological poetry. Instead, it is spoken for by the poet. If nature poetry is essentially a genre that functions as a human monologue, how can it truly claim to be "about nature"?

2. A Hybrid Voice

What is equal dialogue? In Homer's *The Odyssey*, when Odysseus loses contact after fighting in the Trojan War, his son, Telemachus, gathers an assembly of soldiers. These soldiers sit in a circle at the

[6] Lyotard summarizes Robert Porisson's argument as follows. "To confirm that a place is a gas chamber, I accept only the victims of this gas chamber as witnesses. However, according to my counterpart, only the dead victims are bound to exist. If not, this gas chamber will not be the same as he claims. Therefore, the gas chamber does not exist." (Jean-Francois Lyotard 2015: 20)

center of the Agora. The ancient Greeks referred to this circle (圓) as *isēgoria*. Within this circle, soldiers engaged in open discussions to decide on future military actions. Any Greek citizen could participate in these deliberations and express their opinions. In ancient Greek society, *isēgoria* thus represented "the right to speak equally" or "the right to speak freely and equally." (Yang Tae-jong 양태종 2009: 133~158) Even in modern times, *isēgoria* is often considered synonymous with freedom of expression.

Etüden imSchnee (2014), a novel *by* Japanese author Yoko Tawada (多和田葉子; born 1960),[7] explores the unique concept of writing an autobiography of a polar bear. The novel features three polar bears as protagonists, each appearing one after another, living in human society alongside various animals. However, this work is far from being a simple fable or allegory. In the three-part narrative, the main character of Chapter 1, Barbara, experiences "bear-like" sensations of thirst and hunger, uses objects with her claws, serializes her writings as an author, and builds a community with other animals. In this sense, Barbara embodies a complex blend of human and polar bear characteristics.[8] Rather than merely personifying animals, the

[7] Yoko Tawada (多和田葉子; born 1960) is a Japanese translator and novelist. He is also a bilingual writer who creates in both Japanese and German. He visited Germany on a Siberian train alone in 1979 despite his young age of 19 when he was in Tachikawa High School. After receiving a degree in Russian literature from Waseda University in 1982, he moved to Hamburg, Germany, where he entered the business of distributing books with his father's business colleagues. In 1990 he received a master's degree in contemporary German literature, and in 2000 he received a doctorate in German literature from the University of Zurich. He has lived in Berlin since 2006. He began his career in Germany by translating the Japanese poem he had written into German and publishing the 1987 poetry collection "*Nur da wo du bist da ist nichts—Anata no iru tokoro dake nani mo nai*." He also began his career in Japan in 1991 when he published his first novel, *I lost my heel* and received the Gunjo New Literature Award. In Germany, he received the Goethe Literary Award and the Clist Award, and in Japan, he received the Akutagawa Award, the Tanizaki Junichiro Award, and the Yomiuri Literary Award.

[8] *Etude in Snow* was first published by Japanese publisher 新潮社 on January 27, 2011, under the title *A Trainee With Snow 雪の練習生*. And This novel won the Noma Literary Award in the same year and the Yomiuri Award in 2012. Later in

novel can be better described as employing a form of *hybridization*. The characters transcend conventional boundaries between humans and animals, creating a unique narrative that goes beyond typical anthropomorphism.

The novel begins with Barbara's recollection of her childhood (Yuko Tawada 2020:18). What is interesting is that this scene quickly transitions into a meeting setting. During this meeting, Barbara highlights the "basic principle of democracy," stating that everyone should have the freedom to express their opinions. She then proposes "bicycle riding" as a key environmental policy. By riding bicycles, she argues, it is possible to reduce public transportation emissions and save electricity. Through these two scenes—recollecting her childhood and participating in discussions—the author introduces two modes of communication: a hybrid subject capable of both monologue and dialogue. Barbara, as a polar bear who is also aware of her own existence in a human-like manner, advocates for environmental preservation and emphasizes the "existence of polar bears" as beings deserving of attention.

This form of mixed voice, where human and animal perspectives overlap, is similarly present in the works of Kim Hye-soon (born 1955), a prominent Korean poet known for exploring these themes.

I didn't steal it, but I have to die.

I didn't kill him, but I have to die.

without trial

without a beating

You have to bury yourself in a hole.

2014, the German version of *Etüden im Schnee* was published by Konkurs-Buch Press. The reference in this study is *Etude in Snow* (Hyundai-Munhak, 2020).

A black forklift came in.

Kill him! Kill him! There's no time to do it.

There's no time for blood to splatter on the dung wall.

As soon as I got out of the boat, my skin was peeled off, and I didn't have any time to be a cheap pair of shoes.

An interrogator with a blue face and black glasses blow! French! There's no time to do it.

I don't have time to jump rope in desperate fear that I won't be able to withstand this torture.

It's like biting a friend's palms on the cheek coming from the next room.

I don't even have time to bite the flesh in my mouth.

Tie your hands and feet together, tilt your head back, and water them.

Mom, forgive me. I'm sorry. I won't do that again. There's no time to do it.

No rope, no handcuffs.

…

In the grave, I kick the broth in my stomach. I kick the gas.

My stomach explodes in the grave.

It boils like an ugly stew in the grave.

Blood flows out of the grave.

On a rainy night, the fishy pig goblin lights flash.

A burst bowel rises through the grave and over the mound.

It's a resurrection! The intestines are alive! It's alive like a snake!

Bloom up, pig!

Fly pig! [9]

(Kim Hye-soon 김혜순 2016: 45)

Since the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Papyeong-myeon (파평면), Paju(파주), in 2000, the Korean government has treated livestock epidemics by burying living animals as if they were disposable waste. To the authorities, livestock are commodities, not living beings, and if sterilization is not an option, their bodies are "to

[9] "훔치지도 않았는데 죽어야 한다/ 죽이지도 않았는데 죽어야 한다/ 재판도 없이/ 매질도 없이/ 구덩이로 파묻혀 들어가야 한다// 검은 포클레인이 들이닥치고/ 죽여! 죽여! 할 새도 없이/ 알전구에 똥칠한 벽에 피 튀길 새도 없이/ 배 속에서 나오자마자 가죽이 벗겨져 알록달록 싸구려 구두가 될 새도 없이/ 새파란 얼굴에 검은 안경을 쓴 취조관이 불어! 불어! 할 새도 없이/ 이 고문에 버틸 수 없을 거라는 절박한 공포의 줄넘기를 할 새도 없이/ 옆방에서 들려오는 친구의 뺨에 내리치는 손바닥을 깨무는 듯/ 내 입 안의 살을 물어뜯을 새도 없이/ 손발을 묶고 고개를 젖혀 물을 먹일 새도 없이/ 엄마 용서하세요 잘못했어요 다시는 안 그럴게요 할 새도 없이/ 포승줄도 수갑도 없이 … (중략)… 무덤 속에서 복부에 육수 찬다 가스도 찬다/ 무덤 속에서 배가 터진다/ 무덤 속에서 추한 찌개처럼 끓는다/ 핏물이 무덤 밖으로 흐른다/ 비오는 밤 비린 돼지 도깨비불이 번쩍번쩍한다/ 터진 창자가 무덤을 뚫고 봉분 위로 솟구친다/ 부활이다! 창자는 살아 있다! 뱀처럼 살아 있다!// 피어라 돼지!/ 날아라 돼지!" (Kim Hye-soon 김혜순 2016: 45)

be buried in a pit." Only humans are afforded the right to medical treatment, trial, or punishment. Moreover, pigs cannot even be "tortured." They die as beings unable to testify, unable to voice their fear, empathize with the suffering of their family and companions buried alive, or beg for mercy.

Thus, human violence against animals does not reflect the limits of humanity but rather reveals an abyss—a bottomless pit of cruelty that fails to recognize such actions as violence, even when murder is being committed right before our eyes. In confronting the reality of violence inflicted upon both humans and animals, the poet delves into the intersections of human history and natural history. He critiques the anthropocentric perspective that documents human torture but omits the slaughter of nature. It is, in essence, a confession of sin—a confession of humanism's fault in portraying only humans as active subjects while reducing other animals and nature to passive backgrounds or non-existent entities.

This work, therefore, reminds us of a trauma that humanity cannot easily process. By departing from the historical view that separates perpetrators and victims among humans, we confront a deeper natural historical truth: all humans are complicit as murderers.

Interestingly, this poetry collection was initially recognized as an award-winning work for the 5.18 Literary Prize (5.18 문학상), but the decision was later revoked. This can be seen as a move to protect the spirit of the 5.18 pro-democracy movement. However, at the same time, it highlights the fact that the slaughter of pigs cannot be simplified into the realm of human history alone. We must ask ourselves: Can humanism truly address the trauma of natural history? No, human history tends to suppress such trauma. The slaughter of humans and pigs must be treated qualitatively differently, and in doing so, 'genocide' becomes a term exclusively applicable to human history. As a result, the narrative emerges: only humans are "massacred." Animals are either consumed or silenced. They belong to the history of abandonment—the history of non-subjects, marked by the absence of history or by suffering that can only be testified through the body.

In this context, filth and odor become the true language of Kim Hye-soon's poetry. The broth seeping from the abdomen, the stench of a mass grave, and the will-o'-the-wisp flickering above it—these are the only ways in which pigs can bear witness to their slaughter. This is what she means by, "the word ghost read" (from *My Words Hurts* *글씨가 아프다*). Throughout her collection, Kim Hye-soon speaks for beings who are forced to express themselves not through language, but through the body's lower parts. By shedding blood and filth, animals testify to their pain. The smell of a decaying corpse becomes their final scream—a new, eerie form of nature that unsettles humanity.

Kim Hye-soon cries out, "Let's shot the last poem and die!" (from *Twin Octopus* *쌍둥이문어*). Animals do not bleed as martyrs; they bleed so as not to be silenced. The grotesque imagery presented by the poet evokes the mental trauma that permeates the history constructed by human reason. Humanity's existence is sustained by the death of animals. We are all complicit in this sin simply because we are human. So how, then, does the poet overcome this trauma?

I'm a pig who doesn't know I'm a pig.

But if you spill your face in the wash, you'll see a pig.

I'm a teacher who doesn't know I'm a pig.

I just draw on the blackboard every day.

I'm a patient who needs to soothe the pig in people's body.

And then I see only pigs in people's bodies.

What should I do with this animal that smells every other day?

What should I do with this pig who screams when I don't feed him for a day?

Monk! Monk! Monk 'Wall Facer'!

Does it open if I look at the wall for a long time?[10]

(Kim Hye-sun 김혜순 2016: 36)

Declaring himself to be a pig, the poet emphasizes the animalistic nature of humans. Who dares claim that humans are fundamentally different from pigs? Humans, who eat, excrete, and sleep like pigs, are merely "the pig in people's body" with the intelligence to draw dirty water on a blackboard. By shocking readers with this degrading portrayal of humanity, the work invites us to see the world from the perspective of animals. The statement "I'm a pig who doesn't know I'm a pig." makes human look from the same eye level as pigs, rather than down at pigs. This refusal to idolize humans as superior beings is one of the most striking aspects of the poem.

However, certain doubts arise. In what sense does the paradox, "I'm a pig who doesn't know I'm a pig," serve as a way to avoid the obvious fact that the poet is human in reality? Through the motif of a "wall" and its practice, the poet dreams of the possibility of dehumanization—of transcending the boundaries of being human. In these daydreams, "I" is no longer human. "I" am either a pig or something beyond human. If this is the case, the hidden message behind the poem could be a negation: "I am not a person who slaughtered pigs." Perhaps the poet is attempting to declare that, by identifying as a pig, he no longer needs to bear the sins of humanity. Isn't

[10] "나는 돼지인 줄 모르는 돼지예요/ 그렇지만 세숫물에 얼굴 쏟으면 일단 돼지가 보이죠/ 나는 돼지인 줄 모르는 선생이에요/ 매일 칠판에 구정물만 그리죠/ 나는 몸 안의 돼지를 달래야 하는 환자예요/ 그러고도 사람들 몸 안에 좌정한 돼지만 보여요/ 하루만 걸러도 냄새 진동하는 이 짐승을 어찌할까요/ 하루만 먹이지 않아도 꽥꽥 소리를 지르는 이 돼지를 어찌할까요// 스님! 스님! 면벽 스님!/ 벽을 오래 바라보고 있으면 열리나요?" (Kim Hye-sun 김혜순 2016: 36)

this nothing more than a rhetorical tactic to avoid guilt and responsibility? Rather, does this rhetoric contain a sense of being the chosen people or even evil in that it distinguishes oneself from other humans?

The implications of this paradox are further explored in the poet's essay *To Do Woman-Animal-Asia (여자짐승아시아하기)*. "The journey of the beast is not about traveling outside myself, but about sharing the externality of the beast's realm with me. Doesn't this challenge the concept of unity within existence? **My body and the beast's body voluntarily create a hybrid form.** By reclaiming the language that belittles women and beasts, I seek to become my beast. Thus, the emerging monster—the human beast—becomes the future, arriving in a new domain of life. **Isn't this beyond the category of humanity that is constructed through language and power?**" (Kim Hye-sun 김혜순, 2019: 21) Through these counter-statements, the poet reveals his true aim. Paradoxical statements are a way of becoming a "hybrid non-body" (혼종의 비체) that does not speak as a human but also does not speak on behalf of a pig. It is a strategy devised by the poet to escape the power structures of the "category of humanity." (인간이라는 범주)

In this way, Kim Hye-soon confronts the unresolved agony of trying to completely deny the undeniable fact that she is human. What kind of human beings can claim not to be human? For this reason, we can reverse her statement and affirm the following: Kim Hye-soon is human. Even when she thoroughly critiques and questions humanity, she remains human. Moreover, can we truly say that the conscious creation of a "hybrid non-body" through the voluntary merging of human and animal is not inherently human-centered? Who can verify the willingness of pigs in the process of becoming a hybrid body? Pigs are still subjects of human reflection or remain in our consciousness as representations of guilt. We remain human beings.

Perhaps the poet is fully aware of this contradiction. When Kim Hye-soon's poetry is interpreted as "recreating a dehumanized self" or "creating a hybrid non-body," this kind of de-subject discourse risks being seen as a compromise that prematurely avoids the

guilt one must bear as a human. However, there is a subtle difference between how her poetry has been interpreted and how it is represented. Her poems question more than they affirm, and they stop at a precise point rather than advancing forward. In the poem It's Okay to Be a Pig—Pig 禪, the poetic speaker asks, "Does it open if I look at the wall for a long time?" This speaker's position is located within the "wall." In other words, the poetic speaker stands at a crossroads, reflecting on and confronting humanity from within the "wall," while simultaneously exploring the potential for de-subjectification beyond it.

Above all, while Kim Hye-soon advocates for the post-historical, de-humanizing concept of "homelessness" with a confident voice in her poetics, her poetry itself does not speak with the same certainty. "I am a pig who doesn't know I'm a pig," she hesitates, speaking in an ironic tone. This suggests that the ultimate expression of humanity is the irony of being "a pig that is not a pig" or "a human that is not a human." What does this structure of ironic statements mean? We must remember that we cannot assert that de-subjectification is truly possible or that we can transcend the "wall" of humanity. Such a belief is just another compromise. We must acknowledge ourselves as human and confront the guilt of being human. We must deal with the consequences of being human as humans. The "wall" that Kim Hye-soon's poetry encounters is the interface between humanity and dehumanization. Thus, whether the poet intended it or not, her work leads us to the following questions: Where exactly is the place that can bear the sins of the animal holocaust? Where is the position to accept responsibility? Is it the moment when you look at your own face in the mirror, or is it the moment when you say that you have surpassed a human being?

3. Inequality of Speech

In Yoko Tawada's novel and Kim Hye-soon's poetry, we observe the phenomenon of blending human and animal voices. While this may ultimately be no more than a human attempt at dialogue that crosses species boundaries, it nonetheless reflects a deep-seated desire for such communication. What matters is the impact of this ontological *yō* (揺)—the wavering or shifting of being—on people. Fundamentally, their literature aspires to establish an equal dialogue between two entities: humans and animals, which can be understood as *isēgoria*.

However, Jacques Rancière has argued that true equality cannot be achieved solely through the right to speak equally. In his seminal work *La Mésentente* (1995), influenced by a Marxian perspective, Rancière introduces the concept of mésentente, or "discord," which highlights the impossibility of communication between classes. Here, the term "class" is not limited to economic divisions but also includes differences in political ideology, gender, ethnicity, and religion.

What is crucial, according to Rancière, is that the failure of communication between these classes does not stem from using different words but from using the same words in fundamentally different ways. He defines *mésentente* as "a conflict between those who say 'white' and those who also say 'white,' but who do not understand the same thing or are unsure whether the other is referring to the same thing when using the term 'white.'" Just as the political right and left both use the term "freedom" but attribute entirely different meanings to it, each class cannot communicate with others because they understand language in entirely different contexts.[11] For

[11] Rancière's political philosophy aims to understand the discord of a particular era. Discord refers to a state of conflict caused by the use of the same vocabulary in completely different ways, such as a paradoxical situation in which the left and the right use the vocabulary of freedom equally to justify their practice. "We understand

this reason, Rancière criticizes Habermas's theory of the public sphere. The process of sharing opinions and reaching a consensus does not lead to true equal dialogue.

Similarly, Lyotard raises two major issues in *The Differend* (1983). The first is the impossibility of true dialogue in the public sphere. Even if every member of society participates in the conversation, equal dialogue cannot be achieved. This is because each individual's perspective is different, and their capacity for communication varies as well. The second issue he addresses is the practice of engaging in dialogue under the guise of fairness or neutrality, or speaking on behalf of others who are incapable of expressing themselves. For instance, Lyotard states, "The harm lies in putting oneself in the position of the other and, instead of acknowledging their otherness, saying 'It's me,' thereby neutralizing their transcendence." (Jean-Francois Lyotard 2015: 201) At that time, this argument was not only aimed at criticizing hypocrites who pretend to be "neutral," but also at challenging the very concept of objective neutrality—the premise upon which modern scholarship is built. The notion of objectivity, which is said to encompass multiple perspectives, is a fiction. Lyotard argued that the process of "gagner," in which different positions compete to establish themselves as the neutral stance within the "genre of discussion," is at the core of modernity (Jean-Francois Lyotard 2015: 231). The fundamental insight underlying the thoughts of both Rancière and Lyotard is that the standard of "fair dialogue" itself can serve as a mechanism for generating discrimination. Public discourse is inevitably asymmetric as long as all individuals belong to different classes and possess varying abilities. In public opinion shaped by such asymmetry, discrimination is justified by ignoring these differences.

discord as a predefined language situation. That is the situation in which one of the interlocutors understands what the other is saying but does not. Discord is not a conflict between someone who says white and someone who says black. It is a conflict between those who say white and those who say white, but those who do not understand the same thing or whether the other person is saying the same thing under the name of white." (Jacques Rancière 2015:19).

Moreover, the scope of verbal expression has long been used as a criterion to separate humans from animals. From Aristotle, who defined humans as "linguistic animals," to the Christian tradition that attributes "sensory souls" to animals but denies them "intellectual souls," and to European explorers during the Age of Discovery who referred to South American natives as "lesser animals," (Dominique Lestel 2001: 1~3) the presence or absence of language skills has been a persistent standard of discrimination.

Similarly, we need to consider the inherent controversy embedded in nature poetry. When viewed as the poet's unilateral testimony about nature, nature poetry can become a tool for defining and subjugating nature, reducing it to a form of dispute. Heo Soo-kyung (허수경; 1964–2018)[12] was a poet who actively engaged with the controversial nature of poetry or literature that addresses nature.

"We cannot decipher the dreams of rocks. We can't decipher the language of rocks. Does that mean that rocks have no relationship with us? That's not true. That's the relationship we have with rocks. Rocks can't relate to us. We are the only ones who believe that we

[12] Poet Heo Soo-kyung debuted as <Silchun-Munhak> in 1987 and published the first poetry of *There's no manure like sadness 슬픔만한 거름이 어디있으랴* (Silchun-Munhak, 1988). He worked as an MBC broadcast writer in his mid-20s to support his family and support his father's cancer fight for five years. Since then, his father has passed away, and after announcing his second book of poetry *The Distant Home for One's Own Life 혼자가는 먼 집* (Munhakgwa-Jisungsa, 1992) in which he goes alone, he has gone to Germany to study archaeology. Later, as a foreigner, he published four poetry and posthumous work in Korea. During his lifetime, the poetry *But My soul is old 내 영혼은 오래되었으나* (Changbi, 2001) *Time for Bronze, Time for Potatoes 청동의 시간, 감자의 시간* (Literature and Intelligence History, 2005) *What the hell, a cold heart 빌어먹을, 차가운 심장* (Literature and Intelligence History, 2011) *At a Station That No One Remembers 누구도 기억하지 않는 역에서* (Literature and Intelligence History, 2016) and posthumous work *The Writings before I die 가기 전에 쓰는 글들* (Nanda, 2019) *Today's illusion 오늘의 착각* (Nanda, 2020).

have something to do with rocks." [13] (Heo Soo-kyung 허수경 2019:78)

On September 12, 2011, in Ankara, the capital of Turkey, Heo Soo-kyung wrote the diary entry mentioned above. Heo, who received his doctorate in Ancient and Eastern Archaeology from the University of Münster in Germany, participated as an archaeologist in the excavation of a tomb site for about two months, starting from August 10, 2011. His choice of the word "rock" instead of "ruins" carries a double meaning. The term "rock" refers both to the remains being excavated and to natural objects in their pure form. Thus, what the poet encounters through the rock is both human history and natural history.

What stands out is his attempt to treat rocks not as tools or weapons, but as beings related to people. The underlying theme of this work is a sense of incomprehension. Rocks cannot be objects of relationships because they cannot be deciphered. However, by using metaphors like "dream of a rock" or "language of a rock," the poet elevates rocks to the status of a "dreaming" and "thinking" entity, akin to a human being. Of course, this is an anthropocentric metaphor based on human experience, and it serves as a rhetorical device to highlight the inevitable reality that we can only perceive rocks from a thoroughly human perspective. Through this reflection, the poet suggests that while it may be impossible to truly relate to rocks, it is still possible to hold the belief that a relationship exists.

Just as rocks hold dual meanings as symbols of both human and natural history, Heo Soo-kyung's poetic thought, developed throughout his life, also evolved within a dual framework: one of realism and ecology. This duality is expressed as both a realist gaze that reveals the structure of sociological "transference" and an ecological gaze that reproduces the cycle of life, or the "eat-and-be-eaten" dynamic.

[13] "바위가 꾸는 꿈을 우리는 해독하지 못한다. 바위의 언어를 우리는 해독하지 못한다. 그렇다고 바위와 우리와의 관계는 없는 것일까? 그렇지 않다. 그것이 바위와 우리가 맺는 관계이다. 바위는 우리와 관계를 맺지 못한다. 우리만 바위와 우리가 관계가 있다고 믿는 것이다." (허수경 2019: 78)

In the suburbs of local cities, there is a river where every greenhouse glows, and a factory that goes under with iron sulfide, and The countryside dying to support the city.

It is a place where mercury and biological oxygen demand coexist.

There is an election commission, there is a reserve force headquarters, and there are empty houses for people who have moved their resident registration.

This is historical site of Gaya (가야), and we are oviparous, and we are infertile, and my father frequently violates the traffic laws in the administrative district, and I frequently spread rumors.

Unexplained plants and insects grow.

My father and I...

I'm living here.[14]

(Heo Soo-kyung 허수경 1988: 86)

[14] "지방도시 근교에는 비닐 하우스마다 한 개씩의 태양이 이글거리고 황화철로 삭아내리는 강과 공장과 사람은 살지 않으나 도시를 먹여살리느라 죽어가는 도시 근교가 있읍니다// 수은납과 생물학적 산소요구량이 공존하는 곳/ 선거관리위원회가 있고 예비군 본부가 있고 주민등록을 옮겨간 사람들의 빈 집이 있는 곳// 여기는 가야터였고 난생 (卵生)인 우리들은 불임인 채 행정구역 안에서 아버지는 수시로 도로교통법을 어기며 나는 수시로 유언비어를 퍼뜨리며/ 해명되지 않는 식물들과 곤충들이 자라고/ 아버지와 나는/ 살고 있읍니다" (허수경 1988: 86)

The poem *We Live in the Suburbs of Local Cities* (우리들은 지방도시 근교에서 살고) illustrates an ecological awareness while using urbanizing as its subject. In particular, it reveals that Heo Soo-kyung's early poems were written with a clear consciousness of geographical displacement. The poem describes "The countryside dying to support the city." Environmental destruction is carried out to support the comfortable life of the "city," yet the byproducts of this destruction are displaced to the "nearby countryside." As a result, the "city" occupies the central position in the hierarchy of geographical transfer, while the "nature" is positioned on the periphery, ultimately affecting the "river, polluted with iron sulfide" and "Unexplained plants and insects." In this way, insights into ecological consciousness and social relations intersect along the same hierarchy.

The poem suggests that the location of "father and I" is closer to the "suburbs of local cities" and "nature." Above all, the description, "This is historical site of Gaya (가야), and we are oviparous, and we are infertile, and my father frequently violates the traffic laws in the administrative district, and I frequently spread rumors." It means that they continue to be relegated to the bottom of the hierarchy. The time zone they live in is close to the historical past, and the space they live in is close to nature where animals and plants reside. And they are at risk of death due to city pollutants.

There are women in the village who are good at giving birth.

Having a child, Abandoning the child, Having a child, Abandoning the child

Abandoning ten children and raising animals. Children

hanging like persimmons from trees

When children hanging from persimmon trees cry,

A crow flies in and pokes at the children.

Sleeping in a horse cage, sleeping in a pig cage,

I was squatting next to the dog house.

I was sleeping next to the rooster.

Women go to the flower garden.

Earthworms live in the flower garden.

Children born between a woman and an earthworm,

They are living in my village.

There is a flood, and the pigs flounder in the water, go to the nearby sea, become food for cutlassfish, drift further away, and become food for root plant.[15]

(Heo Soo-kyung 허수경 2001: 45)

In Heo Soo-kyung's third poetry collection, which prominently features the motif of the apocalypse, what stands out is the

[15] "아이를 잘 낳던 여자들이 우리 마을에는 있네/ 아이를 낳고 버리고 아이를 낳고 버리고/ 열쯤 버리고 짐승을 낳아 키우네 버린 아이들은 파란 감처럼/ 감나무에 매달려 있네/ 감나무에 매달린 아이들이 울면/ 까마귀가 날아와 아이들을 쪼아대네// 말우리에서 잠을 자다가 돼지우리에서 잠을 자다가/ 개집 옆에서 쪼그리고 잠을 자다가/ 수탉이 잠든 옆에서 잠을 자다가/ 여자들은 꽃밭으로 가네/ 꽃밭에는 지렁이가 살고/ 여자들과 상관한 지렁이가 낳은 자식들도/ 우리 마을에 살고 있네// 홍수가 나고 돼지들은 물에서 허우적거리다 근처에 있는 바다로 가서 갈치밥이 되고 더 멀리 떠내려가서는 산등성이에 던져져 산더덕의 먹이가 된다" (허수경 2001: 45)

unique way in which the end of humanity is depicted. The process of human extinction in Her poetry is not portrayed as synonymous with the destruction of the world. Rather, it is a process in which humans—who "consume" nature—eventually return to the natural cycle by becoming beings that are "consumed" by nature in turn. This work uses dramatically exaggerated imagery to express the loss of human vitality.

The poem describes how "women who once gave birth easily" gradually move between "horse cages" and "pig cages" while abandoning their "children," and even give birth to hybrid offspring with "earthworms." Eventually, when the village is filled with "children" born from interfacing with beasts instead of human children, a flood sweeps through the area, and the villagers become "food for cutlassfish" in the sea and "food for root plant."

It is not surprising to approach this grotesque imagery—which is difficult to accept from a human perspective—through an ecological lens. All living beings are interconnected, existing within a relationship defined by "consuming and being consumed." If this work evokes a sense of horror, it may not be due to any explicit cruelty within the poem itself, but rather because it challenges the human consciousness that sees itself only as being in the "position of the consumer" and never the "consumed."

For Heo Soo-kyung, the end of humanity is not simply an image of human extinction. It inevitably involves a return to the "position of being consumed" by nature. This portrayal reveals that his poetry is deeply rooted in an ecological and holistic perspective.

4. Conclusion

Is ecological poetry possible? Let's expand this discussion to reach a conclusion. In the latter part of The *Differend*, Lyotard shifts toward a contemplation that transitions into another of his works, The Postmodern Condition. He poses the following question: if it is impossi-

ble to always know something universally—whether it be the "ideology of nature" or social "commitments"—when different linguistic acts intersect with different purposes, "weren't we modern people in this sense?" (Jean-François Lyotard 2015: 239). This question soon transforms into skepticism about humanism. If modernity is the period in which countless expressions are proposed while maintaining the belief that a person is a "subject" capable of knowing and speaking about nature, then modernity itself becomes a suspicious sign. Who can testify to modernity? If every person can only speak through their own eyes and mouth, who is the subject that sees the world as modernity? Consequently, Lyotard's conclusion is that the modern thought, which defines the world as an object to be "known," is a fiction. He argues that there is only a system where countless discourses compete, leading to the later definition of modern society as postmodernism in his subsequent works.

How, then, can ecological poetry overcome anthropocentrism? What we need to consider here is the deconstruction of ecological poetry based on posthumanism. From a postmodern perspective, there is no "outside" of humans; rather, there are only countless human monologues about nature. In fact, the more nature is represented as neutral, the more the work ends up reinforcing the superiority of the subject that guarantees objectivity. According to Lyotard, such a conclusion is already based on humanism. He argues that escaping humanism is a new form of practice that genuinely embraces nature. This is because human life is fundamentally indebted to non-human entities and is only made possible through relationships with them.

The three poets mentioned earlier each attempt to overcome humanism in different ways. Heo Soo-kyung presents an imaginative reversal of the human-animal hierarchy through the "consume-and-being-consumed" cycle, while Kim Hye-soon envisions a "hybrid non-body" where human and animal voices intertwine. The focus here is on exploring the possibility of post-ecological poetry—an ethical practice that seeks new relationships with animals and objects. The poet's unique contemplation is his unique perspective on nature.

For this reason, ecological poetry, which thoroughly pushes subjective perspectives, can be a practice that dismantles humanism toward nature. From this perspective, post-ecological poetry opens up new horizons for nature for us.

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RE-READING OF KIM HWAN-TAE'S CRITICISM IN THE 1930S: AN AESTHETICIST'S 'DISINTERESTED' WAIT

HYUNIK PARK, PhD
Osan University
45, Cheonghak-ro, Osan, Gyeonggi-do, South Korea
chsuscamp@naver.com

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0007-8171-277X

Abstract: This article examines the significance of Kim Hwan-tae's literary criticism in the 1930s, focusing on the core principles of aestheticism and its connection to Park Yong-chul's poetry. Kim Hwan-tae's criticism of impressionism has been interpreted as an advocacy for the value of pure literature, serving as a counterpoint to the dogmatic criticism championed by KAPF in the 1920s. Discussions of his criticism have often focused on the influence of figures such as Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater. This study argues that Kim Hwan-tae's promotion of impressionism or art supremacy constituted a strategic framework aimed at transforming the roles

of both authors and critics, extending beyond mere opposition to the Korean Artists Proletariat Federation (KAPF) position. His emphasis on 'humility (겸허/謙虛)' and 'discipline (수양/修養)' as essential qualities for critics reflects his ideal of aestheticism. Moreover, the critic's model he advocated, which prioritizes self-discipline and holistic cultivation of personality, draws on Romanticism's 'genius theory (천재론)' and German cultural discourse (독일 교양론), making it a distinctive feature of Kim Hwan-tae's criticism.

Keywords: Kim Hwan-tae; Impressionistic criticism; Strategic literaturism; humility and discipline; Park Yong-chul; aestheticism

1930 년대 김환태 비평 재독: 한 심미주의자의 무심한 기다림

초록 : 본고는 1930 년대 김환태 비평의 비평사적 의의를 심미주의의 본령 및 박용철 시론과의 영향관계를 중심으로 재구해보고자 한다. 김환태의 인상주의 비평은 1930 년대 카프가 주도한 이념 중심의 교조적 비평에 대응하여 순수문학의 가치를 평가한 것으로 평가되었으며, 그동안 매슈 아놀드, 월터 페이터와의 영향 관계를 중심으로 논의되어왔다. 이 글은 김환태의 인상주의 내지 예술지상주의가 반(反) 카프의 입장을 넘어 창작계와 비평계 전체의 변혁을 주문하는 비평적 전략의 하나였음을 논증하고자 한다. 비평가의 자질로서 '겸허' 와 '수양' 에 대한 강조는 심미주의자로서 그가 품고 있었던 개인적, 사회적 이상향을 시사한다. 자기 수련과 전인성 함양을 중시하는 비평가 모델은 낭만주의의 천재론과 독일 교양론을 참조한 것으로, 김환태 비평의 중요한 특징이다.

키워드: 김환태; 인상주의 비평; 전략적 문학주의; 겸허와 수양; 박용철; 심미주의

1. Introduction

Kim Hwan-tae (김환태), born in Muju in 1909, graduated from Bosung High School (普成高普) in 1928. He later attended and

completed the preparatory program at Doshisha University (同志社大學) before returning to Korea in 1934, having graduated from the English Literature Department of Kuju Imperial University (九州帝國大學). Upon his return, he began his career as a literary critic. Following the dissolution of the KAPF in 1936, he became a member of the Guinhoi (九人會) and married Park Bong-ja, the sister of Park Yong-chul (박용철), a significant influence on his work.

Kim Hwan-tae's critical development was deeply shaped by Park Yong-chul, who, as the publisher of *Simunhak* (詩文學) in 1931, championed the principles of organic poetry. However, in 1940, with the Japanese government's policy to suppress the Korean language and the rise of pro-Japanese national literature, he ended his writing career. His declining health led him to resign from teaching and retire to his hometown, where he passed away in May 1944.

In addition to his biological research (Kim Yoon-sik 김윤식 1969), Kim Hwan-tae's literary criticism has attracted attention in two significant areas. First, he established himself as a pioneer of impressionistic criticism in the 1920s and 1930s by advocating for 'impressionism' or 'pure' criticism, which emphasized the autonomy and intrinsic essence of literature, extending beyond the mere opposition to the Korean Artists Proletariat Federation (KAPF) standpoint (Oh Hyung-yup 오형엽 2012; Jeon Jeong Ku 전정구 2012). Second, scholarly interest has focused on his graduation thesis at Kuju Imperial University, titled *Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater as Literature Critics*, which traced the influence of foreign literature on his work (Jang Do-joon 장도준 2014; Choi Myung-pyo 최명표 2019).

This paper builds on these studies by closely examining the underlying principles of Kim Hwan-tae's literary criticism. Chapter 2 explores his impressionistic criticism of literaturism as an "anti-KAPF" strategy. Chapter 3 delves into the underexplored textual dialogues between Kim and Park Yong-chul. The chapter covers Kim Hwan-tae's literary criticism of Park Yong-chul's "On the Publishing of *Simunhak* (詩文學)" (시문학 창간에 대하야) and

"On Effectiveistic criticism" (효과주의적 비평논강) (1931), highlighting a central stance in Kim's literary criticism characterized by "faith" and "waiting" for 'change.' Chapter 4 situates Kim's emphasis on themes of "humility" and "discipline" within the context of modern German liberal arts theory, which focuses on the aesthetic and educational function of art. Building on the work of Hwang Seok-woo (황석우) in the 1910s, the critical ideal of a 'whole person' (全人), integrating both aesthetic and personal excellence, is carried forward into literary criticism in the 1950s.

2. A strategic 'literaturism' after KAPF

Aestheticism, which emphasizes faith in beauty[1], is recognized as a hallmark of Victorian literature. During the 1920s and 1930s, the English department of Ku Ju Imperial University, where Kim Hwan-tae studied, focused on Victorian English literature, similar to the English departments of other Japanese imperial universities. In April 1934, Kim Hwan-tae' revised his graduation thesis, On the Attitudes of Literary Critics (문예비평가의 태도에 대하여), which was originally focused on Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater (졸업논문). Additionally, he expressed his critical perspective through works such as "Purity of Art" (예술의 순수성), "My Attitude of Criticism" (나의 비평의 태도). He also translated Francis Grierson's "Art, Science and Beauty" (예술과 과학과 미와) and Aldous Huxley's "Art and Self-Explanation" (예술과 자명한 것). The texts he published until the following year are important in that they have a declarative meaning that reveals his identity as a critic.

It took a certain amount of time for the ideological coercion shown by KAPF's dogmatic criticism, including 'creative methodology (창작방법론)', to reveal the whole, along with its direct and

1 "아름다움에 대한 신앙을 의미하는 심미주의 (aestheticism)" (R.V. Johnson, 1979:7)

indirect results, and to act as a reflective opportunity for the establishment of literary autonomy and new creation. Aestheticism taken by Kim Hwan-tae during this period indeed corresponds to a position that many authors who are tired of KAPF's hard-line can rely on. However, as a critic, Kim Hwan-tae's self-determination work needs to be considered more closely in terms of strategic literaturism.

> Then came socialist realism, creative methods, humanism, activism, psychology, modernism, and intelligence. A new trend was advocated before the author even captured the true meaning of the idea, and the critic who advocated the new trend immediately suggested another one. To keep pace with all this caution, the progressive writer was unable to get his act together and thus had no time to cultivate a firm literary spirit.
>
> Works are the subject of literary trends. Therefore, the occurrence of a trend must be based on a work that can be disciplined (律) as a trend that is the driving force for the trend to react. Therefore, in front of a new trend, there must be a work that ultimately embodies the trend that preceded it. Nevertheless, there was always a trend in our literature before there was an ultimately embodied work.[2] (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 141-142)

The above is part of the article submitted during a debate with Yi Won-jo (이원조). Kim Hwan-tae points out the absurdity of

[2] "뒤미처 사회주의적 사실주의니, 무엇무엇하는 창작방법이니, 휴머니즘이니, 행동주의니, 심리주의니, 모더니즘이니, 지성이니 하는 잡다한 주의에 사상이 쉴사이도 없이 나왔다. 작가가 한 주의의 진의도 포착하기 전에 새 주의가 제창되었고, 그 새 주의를 제창한 평가가 하루 밤 새에 또 딴 주의를 제시하였다. 이에 이 모든 주의에 보조를 맞추려면 진보적(?) 작가는, 그 송영에 실로 정신을 가다듬을 수 없었으며, 따라서 **일정한 문학적 자세가 방향을 가질** 수 없었던 것은 물론, **확호한 문학정신을 함양**할 겨를도 없었던 것이다. 문학상의 주의의 대상은 작품이다. 그러므로 한 주의의 발생은 그 주의가 반동하려는 원동이 되는 주의로서 율(律)할 수 있는 작품 속에 그 발생 근거를 두지 않으면 안 된다. 따라서 새로이 발생한 한 주의 앞에는, 그에 선행한 주의가 궁극적으로 형상화된 작품이 있어야 한다. 그럼에도 불구하고 우리 문단에는 언제나 궁극적으로 형상화된 작품이 있기 전에 주의가 있었다." (김환태 1988: 141-142). All translations from Korean and highlights are by the author, unless otherwise stated.

all kinds of "ism" in the literary field that prevailed after naturalism, and argues that all "ism" discussed in literature should be based on individual works. The primary purpose of Kim's request for 'the work before interpretation' while reversing the previous sequential relationship between 'ism' as a worldview and the work as its literary configuration was to criticize the entire literary malaise caused by KAPF's Social Realism. However, his criticism is directed at the trend of the entire literary field, which has regarded such mechanical blind fellowship as a "progressive" attitude while indiscriminately accepting and emptying various trends such as humanism, activism, psychology, and modernism as well as KAPF. He criticizes the rigidity of criticism that tried to dissect the work on the premise of "ism (主義)" that precedes the work. On the other hand, he calls for the artist's ability to embody his worldview as an order that rules the reality in his work. In other words, this is nothing less than an argument to understand that the trends of the past, which have constantly appeared, were formed under political, economic, and social conditions, and to derive them under the literary conditions of 'reality' and 'work'. Criticism should be directed at the work, and the author should have his own 'care' to embody the realistic order as the work's inner order.

Kim Hwan-tae defines the literary spirit as "an exploration of humanity, a creative effort to dress it with the expression" and cites Lee Tae-joon (이태준), Park Tae-won (박태원), and Jung Ji-yong (정지용) as those who have shown a lively world of works by sticking to the literary spirit without adhering to the preceding "ism". The literary spirit advocated by Kim Hwan-tae can be said to be an attitude that is faithful to oneself until he can discover and express "ism" based on his personality. Indeed, this lack of literary spirit was true of both writers and critics of the day, who escaped from the frenzy of "Ismism(主義主義)." In this respect, Kim Hwan-tae's impressionistic critique, which denies the leadership of criticism, can be read as a demand that writers take the lead in the maturity and birth of "work-down works."

Considering Kim Hwan-tae's literary strategy as a request for the transition from “the leadership of criticism” to “the leadership of literature,” we can understand the context in which his “impressionistic criticism” insisted that criticism was also a creation.

> A literary critic must first speak of himself. You must confess how impressed and pleased you were in a work and how much you were transformed by it. It is easy to establish an orderly logic. However, it is difficult to express yourself. It is only through this path that literary critics experience the pain of self-expression with creators, that is, the pain of creation. However, in the past, was there a literary critic who tried to speak for himself and tried to infiltrate the world of literature and make it speak its laws to feel the pain of the author's creation as his own?[3] (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988:80)

While the standard of the criticism is inclined to the quantitative aspect of measuring the degree of forward-looking edification during the period when dogmatic criticism was inundated, Kim Hwan-tae’s confession of ‘self-transformation’ in this article is qualitative. This ‘transformation’ is a self-internal change that occurs after the appreciation of literary works, and the direction and nature of change are subject to the individual critic’s reflective observation and confession.

Kim Hwan-tae, who says that the pain of expressing the truth of self-change is not different from the pain of creation, reveals that this self-confession of a critic is the only way to make literature “speak its laws.” If a work has a 'literary order', that order must be

3 “문예비평가는 먼저 자기를 말하여야 한다. 한 작품에서 어떠한 감동과 기쁨을 받았는가를, 그리고 그로 인하여 자기가 얼마만큼 변모되었는가를 고백하여야 한다. 정연한 논리를 세우기는 쉽다. 그러나 자기를 표현하기는 어렵다. 문예비평가가 창작가와 함께 자기표현의 고통을, 다시 말하면 창작의 고통을 맛보는 것은 오직 이 길을 통하여서인 것이다. 그러나 과거에 우리의 어떤 문예비평가가 자기를 말하려고 노력하였으며, 작가의 창작의 진통을 자기의 것으로서 느껴보려고 하였으며, 문학의 세계에 침잠하여 문학 그것으로 하여금 스스로 제 법칙을 말하도록 하려고 하였던가?” (김환태 1988: 80)

identified afterward, through the viewer's inner change and the confession. The identification work requires the courage of critical hesitation that can suspend judgment in the room of reflection created by the distance between the work's inner order and the realistic order. Kim Hwan-tae's proposition of "Return to yourself," which presents appreciation and praise as the mission of criticism, is understood as a strict reality recognition command that attributes the basis and responsible material of creation and criticism to individual critics.

3. Faith and 'disinterested' waiting – "I have something *pregnant*"

After all, aestheticism is no different from the belief that the experience of aesthetic pleasure can make qualitative changes in an individual's life and society as a whole. When the object of that belief is beauty and the response to the belief is an aesthetic pleasure, It is enough to call aestheticism a faith without God. Then, how can we learn the attitude of waiting to face this moment of 'pleasure'? And what does it prepare? In this chapter, we read Kim Hwan-tae's criticism overlapping with Park Yong-cheol's criticism in the 1930s, and try to view the attitude of 'disinterestedness' that he emphasized from the perspective of 'belief' and 'waiting'.

> Criticism of Impressionism still has many lovers today. It tries to impress the work with a relatively simple mind without sincerity and describes the impression with an attractive style. It is closer to interpretation than judgment of the value of the work, and it becomes a guide for our appreciation, based on the work, it creates an artistic work that expresses one's feelings. (Impressionism only describes an individual's aesthetic experience and does not consider its social impact separately, but it has an ideal of appreciating its social value) (…) Literature is delightful, but it is (…) Uninterested interest. It refers to pleasure by contemplation, not pleasure by practice. (…) Art is expressed not by abstract ideas but by concrete forms, and its in-

> fluence on society is not as a conviction of logic but rather through the transmission of emotions.[4] (Park Yong-chul 박용철 2004:29-31)

The quotation is Park Yong-chul's text written in 1931, three years before Kim Hwan-tae's debut as a critic, and is an important article that outlined the flow of criticism and presented the gist of impressionistic criticism. Park Yong-chul explains that impressionistic criticism presupposes a review of the social value of aesthetic experience itself. The basic principle of becoming a guide for appreciation and producing works of art that "express one's feelings" by presenting a perspective of interpretation rather than value judgment is in line with the task of the critic suggested by Kim Hwan-Tae. From an impressionist's point of view, the contemplative pleasure given by the interests as a living person and the aesthetic experience that has left the subjectivity is a germ that can lead to social change due to "transmission(傳染) of emotion" in itself. Aesthetics that trust the ideal of concrete social change caused by contemplation and empathy, not logic and practice, affirms the dialectic of "sense" and "thinking" through art. Let's look at Kim Hwan-tae's mention of the social function of aesthetic experience through art.

> Art teaches us love and sympathy, and it inspires ideal passion and new hope for the ideal. **(…)** This noble experience never disappears without any trace. This artistic excitement does not directly stimulate

[4] "인상주의비평 이것은 오늘날까지도 많은 애호자를 가지고 있다. 성심을 가지지 않고 비교적 소박한 마음으로 작품을 대해서 인상을 받어 드리고 그 인상을 매력있는 필치로 기술하려 한다. 작품의 가치판단보다 해석에 가까워 우리 감상의 지도가 되며 그 작품을 기연삼아 자기의 심정을 토로하는 예술적작품을 스사로 지어낸다. (인상주의가 개인의 미적경험을 기술하는 데 그치고 사회적영향을 따로 고찰하지 아니하는데는 미적경험 그것의 사회적가치를 높이 평가하는 이상이 내재되여 있다) (…) 문학은 쾌감을 일으키는 것 그러나 그것은 (…) 직접 실생활의 이해관계를 떠난 쾌감(Uninterested interest), 실행에 의한 쾌감 아닌 관조에 의한 쾌감을 말한다. (…) 예술은 추상적 관념에 의해서가 아니라 구체적 형상에 의해서 표현하는 것이며 사회에 끼치는 영향도 논리의 설복으로서가 아니라 감정의 전염으로 하는 것이다." (박용철 2004: 29-31)

> our actions but potentially or slowly becomes a factor that determines the actions of our lives. Thus, a great artist is always an educator for mankind.[5] (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 25)

Criticism as an 'interpretation' that faithfully describes an individual's aesthetic experience must form the base to lead to individual qualitative boost through its dialectical principle to lead to empathy and transformation of the interests that dominate the real world. This is the educational function of art and criticism.

Aestheticists have faith in social changes that literary works and the various 'interpretations' presented by viewers who have undergone internal change will create through mutual "transmission of emotions." As discussed in Chapter 2, what a critic who observes and records the possibility needs is the belief that the driving force of change is growing within himself as a daily living person who is faithful to the proposition of "go back to yourself." It is also 'waiting' and patience, which can bring up the language of self-confession that is condensed in the process of immersion in the work and reconstructing the order. It is the attitude of a 'possibleist' to believe in the qualitative changes of individuals that occur repeatedly in the process of enjoying and describing aesthetic pleasure through contemplation and the 'mental' process of sharing and empathy.

It is the author/poet who is at the forefront of this 'belief' and 'waiting'. A poet who can embody the high-order combination of 'sense' and 'thought' in the language in his work is referred to as a 'genius(天才)'. The most important virtue of this 'genius' is also 'waiting' as a belief that a certain 'meaningful moment will arrive, and an integrated 'intelligence' that can unify senses and thoughts. This theory of genius, and the theory of poets and critics that as-

[5] "예술은 사람에게 사랑과 동정을 가르치며, 이상적 열정과 이상에 대한 새로운 희망을 고취하여 준다. (…) 이 고결한 체험은 결코 아무런 흔적도 없이 소멸하지는 않는다. 이 예술적 흥분은 직접 우리의 행위를 자극하지는 않으나, 잠재적으로 또는 서서히 우리의 생활의 행위를 결정하는 요인이 되는 것이다. 이리하여 위대한 예술가는 언제나 인류의 교육자다." (김환태 1988: 25)

sumes the existence of 'God' are both confirmed by Park Yong-chul and Kim Hwan-Tae.

> In the poet's heart and soul comes a lake that sometimes floods in response to outer space or overflows by itself. The engineer, who does not wait for this inspiration and gives up self-help to show off his talent, finally throws away his empty hand. Inspiration comes to us, impregnates us with poetry, and leaves after giving notice of conception. We must reverently raise it like a maiden. (…)…) When full maturity is reached, the placenta rotates and a new creation is born.[6] (Park Yong-chul 박용철 2004: 8-9)

> He is by no means a poet maker. He waits until an inspiration blows into his mind like the wind at the end of a tree, and it grows on its own and drops the placenta. And, nourishes, shapes, and attaches flesh to him until it drops the placenta is his emotion, his intelligence, and his senses.[7] (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 112)

> Even if my criticism is no more than an appreciation, I believe that as the days of my pilgrimage to the garden of art(藝苑) go on, and as I hone my sensitivity, my criticism acquires objectivity and universality so that it moves closer to an increasingly complete critique (there is only God, man is always an imperfect critic).[8] (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 28)

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[6] "시인의 심혈에는 **외계에 감응해서** 혹은 스사로 넘쳐서 때때로 밀려드는 호수가 온다. 이 영감을 기다리지 않고 재조보이기로 자조 손을 버리는 기술사는 드디여 빈손을 버리게 된다. 영감이 우리에게 와서 시를 잉태시키고는 수태를 고지하고 떠난다. 우리는 처녀와 같이 이것을 경건히 받들어 길러야한다. (…) 완전한 성숙이 이르렀을 때 태반이 회동그란이 돌아떨어지며 새로운 창조물 새로운 개체는 탄생한다." (박용철 2004: 8-9)

[7] "그는 결코 시를 만드는 사람은 아니다. 그는 영감이 나무 끝에 오는 바람결같이 그의 마음 속에 불어 오면 그것이 스스로 자라 태반을 떨어뜨릴 때까지 기다린다. 그리고, 그것이 태반을 떨어뜨릴 때까지 그에게 자양을 공급하고, 모양을 만들고, 살을 붙이는 것이 그의 감정이요, 지성이요, 감각이다." (김환태 1988: 112)

[8] "나는 나의 비평이 단지 감상에 지나지 않더라도, 나의 예원의 순례의 날이 길어 갈수록, 그리고 나의 감수성을 연마하여 갈수록, 나의 비평은 객관성과 보편성을 획득하여 점점 완전한 비평(완전한 비평가는 오직 신뿐이다. 인간은 언제나 불완전한 비평가다)에 가까이 갈 줄 믿는다." (김환태 1988:28)

Park Yong-chul explains poetic inspiration and the process of writing using the "Annunciation" motif. What he emphasizes more fundamentally as an "awakened" posture to uphold this "notice" is "an unnamed flame (無名火)," which is an image that embodies the belief and waiting attitude for the birth of a new life. On the other hand, in Kim Hwan-tae's "theory of Jeong Ji-yong (정지용론)", the poet's emotions, intelligence, and senses are presented as qualities necessary to express the inspiration that arrived, such as the "Annunciation." Park Yong-chul's theory of poetry creation, thoroughly explains the detection of "poetic things" and the process of its work itself in the realm of personal experience, and sets its source and origin as "alien(外界)" on an agnostic level. His point of view lies in the context of 'the theory of genius'(天才論) which inherited the romantic poetics from Hwang Seok-woo(황석우) in the 1910s. Kim Hwan-tae also regards the work as "an organism in which life was introduced by the author's inspiration."

On the other hand, the idea of impressionistic criticism assumed by Kim Hwan-tae is explained as the degree to which the subjectivity of "appreciation" is consistent with analytical objectivity. The fact that "God" is assumed to be such a complete critic, that is, the attitude of acknowledging that it is impossible to criticize in which subjectivity and objectivity are unified at a human level, is the driving force for sustaining his "pilgrimage (巡禮)" and the basis for proving the inherent value of criticism. Kim Hwan-tae's critical theory, which paradoxically succeeded in proving the permanence of criticism while insisting on continuing toward the impossible, proceeds to the dialectic of "humility" and "discipline" through Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater.

4. The baptism of Classical Aesthetics – a Self-completion with 'humility'(謙虛) and 'discipline'(修養)

What is the origin of the figure of a critic devoted to a world of absolute beauty, using a humble attitude and the practice of self-discipline as a personal virtue? As mentioned earlier, Matthew Arnold's concept of "disinterestedness (허심탄회)" has always been important in discussing the influence of Kim Hwan-tae's criticism. However, Kim Hwan-tae himself confessed that he remained in a superficial understanding of M. Arnold and W. Pater, the subject of this graduation thesis, and recalls that he was deeply literary influenced by other foreign writers, especially classical aesthetics and artistic philosophy, covering various East and West. Among them, the part that mentions Goethe stands out.

> After entering college, I could not be immersed in this romantic reading because of my major in English literature. In general, in the first grade, I tried to understand classicalism by reading the works of each country, such as Shakespeare, Milton, and Alexander Pope in the UK, works of Racine, Corneille, and Moliere in France, and works of Goethe and Schiller in Germany. Meanwhile, I learned a great lesson from Goethe not from literature but from the philosophy of life. The first is the "effort toward eternity" learned through <Faust>, and the second is the ideal of 'whole person(全人)', whose all human functions are fully, harmoniously developed. It is from P. Eckermann's "Conversation with Goethe".[9] (Kim Hwan-tae 김환태 1988: 181)

[9] "대학에 들어간 후는 전공하는 영문학 텍스트 공부 때문에 이런 낭만적 독서는 할 수 없었으나, 대체로 1 학년 때에는 각국의 고전주의 작품을, 즉 영국의 셰익스피어, 밀턴, 포우프 등의 작품과 불란서의 라신느, 코르네이유, 몰리에르의 작품과, 그리고 독일의 괴테, 실러 등의 작품을 읽고 고전주의에 대하여 이해를 얻으려 하였다. 그러는 동안에 나는 괴테에게서 문학상으로가 아니라, 인생철학상으로 큰 교훈을 얻은 것이 있다. <파우스트>를 통하여 받은「영원의 노력」과 엑켈만의 <괴테와의 대화>를 통하여 배운 모든 인간적 기능이 완전히 조화.발달된 전인에의 이상이다." (김환태 1988:181)

Matthew Arnold's "disinterestedness" and "culture", which refers to a state of immersion unrelated to partisanship or interest, were concepts that included conservative and classist perspectives to resolve the social turmoil of Britain at that time and restore order. In contrast, the "disinterested interest" borrowed by Kim Hwan-tae remained a narrow concept that just emphasized immersion in the work. The two qualities of a critic emphasized by Kim Hwan-tae were 'humility' to the artist as a creator and 'discipline' to enhance his aesthetic sense. The argument that the artist should be respected as a creative subject who provides an opportunity for accurate appreciation of the work and an opportunity for aesthetic and personal enhancement reaches the ideal of "Zarte Empirie" (Goethe). It means "the unity of subjectivity and objectivity." The leadership of literary criticism he set and expected after KAPF was a role of presenting the variety of "beauty" that literature can show through "artistic pilgrimage" rather than deduction. At least, Kim Hwan-tae's criticism differed from Arnold's concept of social criticism in the legitimate aspect of the argument. At the same time, his criticism was also different from Pater's self-sufficient sensualism. This is because the core of his criticism was not just the follow-up of Arnold and Pater, but the classical aesthetics and metaphysical orientation.

In the literary situation after KAPF's withdrawal, Arnold's 'disinterestedness' had no choice but to be reduced to the 'pose' of personal appreciation amid 'indifference' to the social dimension. Naturally, the 'humility' claimed by Kim Hwan-tae was a critic's thorough non-interventionism or isolationism through his work and had room for interpretation as part of its concealment strategy. However, this interpretation paradoxically shows the contemporary situation of the decline in the status of criticism itself and dwarfing. At this point, we can infer the background of Kim Hwan-tae, who studied Goethe and Schiller, focusing on the relationship between 'Bildung' (self-completion/culture), literature, and the educational function of art.

The journey of 'self-completion' through the mediation of timeless classical works of art presupposes the uniqueness of an irre-

placeable individual. The cultural discourse of Germany in the 19th century served as a driving force to break through the uncertainty of the times while enjoying the universal value of human beings that is eternal to individuals and contributed to the solidarity of the national community. In this context, the critic is at the forefront of aesthetic training and self-cultivation and is assumed to be a mediating entity that performs the educational function of the art.

Kim Hwan-tae's impressionism in the 1930s was submitted as an alternative to social transformation through literature after the frenzy of political ideology. He positioned criticism as the rank of creation and called on both authors and critics to train themselves as an outstanding individual who combines intelligence, emotion, and virtue with "Willie zur Gestaltung (창조에의 의지)." Kim Hwan-tae trusted the gradual changes in individuals and society brought about by the experience of aesthetic pleasure and emotional training through works of art.

5. Conclusion

This paper is a comprehensive analysis of the literary criticism of Kim Hwan-tae, who advocated impressionism and aesthetic criticism in the 1930s, following the decline of KAPF. First, we examined how his impressionism was adopted as a form of strategic literaturism with implications beyond anti-KAPFism. He established his identity as a critic by urging both writers and critics to return to their 'inside self' and rebuild literature itself. Second, by analyzing the poetry of the contemporary Park Yong-chul and the criticism of Kim Hwan-tae, we demonstrated the utopia they shared. Both figures placed trust in the qualitative changes that individual artistic experience, creation and appreciation, and the interaction of criticism could foster in emotion, life, and society as a whole. This perspective was expressed through an attitude of 'faith' and 'waiting' for the qualitative transformation of modern society. Finally, we reconstructed the context of

Kim Hwan-tae's work within the history of modern Korean criticism by confirming that the virtues of 'humility' and 'discipline', which Kim Hwan-tae emphasized as the cornerstone of a critic's role, shared commonalities with modern German cultural discourse and the genealogy of impressionistic criticism.

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The author states that there is no conflict of interest to disclose.

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A CURRICULAR STUDY OF PROMOTING STUDENT CREATIVITY AND AGENCY THROUGH CLASSICAL LITERATURE CLASSES BASED ON THE WORKS OF KIM SOO-YOUNG

HYEON-JEONG LEE, PhD student
Institute of Korean Studies, Yonsei University
Republic of Korea
#617 Oesol-gwan50 Yonsei-ro
Seodaemun-gu, Seoul
jayhera@hanmail.net

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7031-0723

Abstract: This paper analyzes a real classroom curriculum using classical literature in a second-year Classical Literature classroom at a high school in Seoul, South Korea. The class was designed in a very creative way. Learners

who signed up for this class could freely choose an author. Among them, Kim Soo-young (김수영) was the most voted for author. The class was organized in teams where learners participate through team activities. The teams read and interpreted Kim's poetry and prose. Each student then spoke about their favorite piece. The teams discussed their favorite pieces, then decided which work represents the team. One of the team members introduced the selected work to the other students. The students then organized a performance of the work presented with others in the class. After some discussion, Kim's poetry, prose, and diary entries are reimagined in the form of a play. Team members share and prepare a performance of the play they have discussed. Students were able to practice as playwrights, directors, prop designers, and sound effect engineers. After this preparation, all five teams performed their plays. Using the work of Kim Soo-young, students were able to interpret literature into their own creative works. This curriculum asked students to create as well as evaluate other performances, allowing them to practice self-directed learning and develop agency over their study of classical literature. This lesson also allowed students to foster creativity through collaboration and discussion with their peers, practicing key social skills such as empathy and consideration for others.

Keywords: Soo-young Kim, Literary Education, Theater Education, Subjectivity, Creativity

학생들의 창의성 및 주체성을 계발하는 고전문학 교육과정 연구: 김수영 문학을 중심으로

초록: 본 논문은 고전 문학 작품을 활용한 실제 수업을 분석한 것이다. 이 수업은 서울에 위치한 어떤 고등학교 2 학년 '고전 수업 읽기' 에서 이루어졌다. 이 수업은 매우 창의적인 방식으로 설계되었다. 이 수업을 신청한 학습자들은 자유롭게 작가를 선택할 수 있다. 그 중에서 학습자들은 김수영 작가를 가장 많이 투표하여 선택했다. 이 수업은 팀으로 구성된다. 이 수업에서 학습자는 팀 활동을 통해 참여하게 된다. 정해진 팀은 김수영의 시와 산문을 읽고 해석한다. 학습자는 각자 자신이 좋아하는 작품을 선택한다. 토의 과정을 통해 팀을 대표하는 작품이 결정된다. 팀 중의 한 명은, 결정된 작품을 다른 학습자들에게 소개한다. 그리고 학습자는 본 수업에서 다른 학습자와 함께 발표한 작품을 공연 형식으로 기획한다. 팀원들과 토론과정을 거친다.

김수영의 시, 산문, 일기는 '연극' 형식으로 재창작된다. 팀원들은 함께 의논한 연극 공연 방식을 공유하고 준비한다. 학습자들은 희곡 작가, 감독, 무대 소품 준비, 소리 효과를 맡아 연습한다. 5 개의 팀은 준비한 작품을 공연한다. 학습자는 김수영 작품을 활용하여, 창의적인 작품을 재창작할 수 있다. 이 수업에 참여하는 학습자는 공연을 창작하고, 다른 작품을 감상하는 평가자가 된다. 본 수업은 학습자가 고전 문학을 활용한 수업을 통해, 자기 주도적 수업을 실천하고, 이에 따라 주체성을 기를 수 있었다. 또한 본 수업은 학습자가 다른 학습자와의 협업과 토론을 통해 창의성을 기르고, 타자를 공감하고 배려하는 태도를 경험할 수 있는 수업이었다.

키워드: 김수영, 문학 교육, 연극 교육, 주체, 창의성

1. Introduction

This study analyses a practical case study of curriculum application in a Classical Literature class with literary texts. In this class, students select and read literary texts, and the instructor applies experimental appreciation methods to move students toward active learning behaviors. The course is designed to encourage students to go beyond the mere act of reading literary texts, and to promote creative thinking and sense of agency by performing theatric works. In this class, students work in groups to select a text by Kim Soo-young (김수영) and engage in analytical writing and presentation. Based on this, they plan and create a performance piece. Throughout the process, the instructor organizes the class so that all students can participate without being excluded, and plans the lesson content to support students who are struggling in the class.

Classical Literature is a second-year high school course that is offered outside of the regular language arts curriculum. The purpose of this course at the school level is to provide educational support for

the following students: 1) Students who want to take literature classes in an experimental way, 2) Students who are not interested in regular Korean language classes and are not performing well in related subjects, 3) Students who want to be motivated to study without the pressure of grades and entrance exams, 4) Students who want to improve their skills in the 'literature' section of the Korean language class, and 5) Students of all levels who wish to participate in a mixed-level class.

This class could be the new way of teaching that these students need. This course is part of the second-year high school curriculum in Seoul, South Korea, and is a common course within the subject of Korean language education. However, it is the only course in the curriculum that is not directly related to university entrance exams. It is a basic liberal arts course with no set curriculum, and the professor and students can freely choose the textbooks.

This class is not evaluated by points and grades. Instead, it honours students' creative thinking and participation in theater performances created through group activities. Therefore, student participation is important in this class. In this lesson, the instructor has designed the lesson with opinions from students. The instructor has also planned for students to actively participate in the lesson.

First, the instructor and students in this class discussed what would be selected as the main text. The students named several writers throughout the discussion. Students were more interest-ed in poets than novelists. They preferred poetry to novels because poems are shorter than novels. Students wanted to learn poetry in an enjoyable way. Students mentioned Kim Soo-young (김수영), Kim Chun-soo (김춘수), and Baek Seok (백석). The instructor wrote the names of the poets on the board and had the students vote. Among them, the students chose Kim Soo-young the most. Therefore, Kim Soo-young was chosen as the author to be studied in this class, which included his poems and prose.

Kim Soo-young (1921-1968) was one of South Korea's leading poets. Kim began his creative career in 1945 with the publication

of his poem "Song of Myojung."(*묘정의 노래*) However, Kim lived through the Korean War in 1950 and the April 19 Revolution in 1960, two important events in Korean history. He was taken to a prisoner of war camp on Geoje Island where he was held for many years. The far-right government after the April 19 Revolution caused him psychological confusion and pain. Kim's work was bound to change with the times. Kim tried to look at the times with an "alert spirit," and he wanted to write new poems with an alert spirit. (Cho Kang-sok 조강석 2018: 283)

> To be an object or subject of criticism with an 'alert spirit' presupposes a creative life. And all of this creative life is fluid and developmental. There is a certain ethic of the moment. This is the modern conscience. It was my purpose to speak of the density of this ethic in my relationship to ″Forsythia Tied to the Fortune Teller″ alone. ″If I had not written ‘’Encounter magazine‘’ and had written a monthly review of ‘’Forsythia,‘’ I would have written something unselfish, and therefore evil. I would have praised him unworthily, and I would have killed or injured myself to save him. However, by breaking through the troubles of the ″Encounter,″ I was able to save him and save myself, to see him as a person with an alert spirit and to see myself as a person with my own spirit. In other words, to put it simply, a person who lives with alert spirit is a person who entrusts the fulfillment of the whole body of truth and beauty in the moment while constantly improving creation. (Kim Soo-young 김수영 1981b: 266).[1]

[1] 〈제정신〉을 갖고 산다는 것은, 어떤 정지된 상태로서의 〈남〉을 생각할 수도 없고 , 정지된 〈나〉를 생각할 수도 없는 일이다. 엄격히 말하자면 〈제정신을 갖고 사는〉 〈남〉도 그렇고 〈나〉도 그렇고, 그것이 〈제정신을 가진〉 비평의 객체나 주체가 되기 위해서는 창조생활(넓은 의미의 창조생활)을 한다는 전제가 필요하다. 그리고 이러한 모든 창조생활은 유동적인 것이고 발전적인 것이다. 여기에는 순간을 다투는 어떤 윤리가 있다. 이것이 현대의 양심이다 .「입춘에 묶여온 개나리」와 나와의 관계만 하더라도 이 윤리의 밀도를 말하고 싶은 것이 나의 목적이었다.「엔카운터지」를 쓰지 못하고「입춘에 묶여온 개나리」의 월평을 썼더라면 나는 사심(私心)이 가시지 않은 글을 , 따라서

The above is a piece of prose by the poet Kim Soo-young. For Kim Soo-young, “creative” life and “subjectivity” are important. Kim did not give up on literature despite the miserable conditions of his time. Kim thought of literature through his experience of the Korean War and the pain of living in poverty. With an “alert spirit,” he tried to see literature for what it was. He emphasized the creativity of the moment, like “a certain ethic of fighting for the moment.” For him, “the creative life is fluid, developmental”. The “truth” and “beauty” of literature can be achieved through the “constant improvement of creation”. We can see that creative thinking is necessary for individuals to overcome the pain of life. This creativity makes the individual see life's problems in a new way. Creativity enables the individual to discover a new self. In other words, creativity establishes the individual's subjectivity.

This student-centered “creativity” has been emphasized since the revision of the 6th National Curriculum. It is concerned with the student’s active and self-directed education. However, in the past, it has been difficult for students to express their creativity because of the rigid, hierarchical relationship between teachers and students. Students are very passive in relation to teachers. The instructor sees the student as an object that lacks subjectivity. This relationship needs to change. And, somewhat paradoxically, this can be changed through creative teaching. This problem can be solved if students are offered creative lessons organized by instructors who consider a horizontal,

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사심(邪心) 있는 글을 썼을 것이다. 개운치 않은 칭찬을 하게 되었을 것이고 , 그를 살리기 위해서 나를 죽이거나 다치거나 했을 것이다. 그러나「엔카운터 지」의 고민을 뚫고 나옴으로써 나는 그를 살리고 나를 살리고 그를 〈제정신을 가진 사람〉으로 보고 나를 〈내 정신을 가진 사람〉으로 볼 수 있게 되었다. 그러니까 쉽게 말하자면 제정신을 갖고 사는 사람이란 끊임없는 창조의 향상을 하면서 순간 속에 진리와 미(美)의 전신(全身)의 이행을 위탁하는 사람이다. (김수영 1981b : 266)

rather than hierarchical, teacher-student relationship. (Minwoo Nam 남민우 2004: 26)

This classroom approach is intended to be conducive to an active relationship between instructor and learner. Students are generally experiencing tension and stress about grades and the college admissions system. They are maintaining friendships in a competitive environment. The curriculum needs to understand and recognize this situation. In doing so, this lesson sets one goal: to give students a break from the tension and competition. This method of teaching can provide students with a sense of security and joy. In addition, students can appreciate Kim's poetry and prose, which allows them to appreciate literature and foster a sense of community. Students can empathize with the pain and sorrow expressed in the literary works. Through this process, students will be able to look at their own pain and struggles objectively. Students can reflect on their own identity and grow in a positive way through this process. In short, this lesson aims to improve the competitive relationship between students through the medium of literature, and to develop a sense of self.

The main textbook for this class is The Essentials: Kim Sooyoung (Kim Soo-young 김수영 2022). Students can read the book together and choose their own works. They also form their own groups. The class is composed of 25 students, with 5 students per group.

The students in this class are a mix of high and low-level students. In Korean, lower level students are defined as “low learners”. Before the term “slow learner” was used, the term “Borderline Intellectual Functioning (BIF)” was used to describe them. The term “slow learner” is defined as a student who scores between the 70th and 85th percentile on a standardized intelligence test, or who scores between the 70th and 79th percentile on the Wechsler Intelligence Test in Korea. A “slow learner” can also be defined as a student who scores 40% or less on a standardized test of academic ability. This was used to clearly identify students for special education. (Kyung-Eon Yang 양경언 2021:114)

The students who have signed up for this class are divided into “slow students” and “non-slow students”. The students are there voluntarily as an intentionally collaborative environment. As an instructor, it's important to pay attention to this. The instructor should lead the class in a way that allows students to help each other and integrate. The instructor must organize the class without bias or discrimination. The instructor guides students to participate in the class in a harmonious way.

Prior research relevant to this study can be divided into three categories. First, studies related to analyzing literary works for effective teaching. Second, studies that examine social changes in students through literary education. Third, studies that examine internal changes in students through literary education.

First, the following studies analyzed Kim's literary works for poetry education. Kim (2015) analyzed the content and characteristics of the poems that students perceived. The results showed that students viewed Kim's poetry as modernism differently than expected. Noh Chul's (노철) study is an interpretation that connects ‘cowardice’ and 'narrow mindedness' in Kim's poems with ‘satire’ and ‘deconstruction.’ This interpretation is an example of teaching poetry rhetoric at the students' level. A similar case is found in Yang's (양경언) study. Other studies by Hyun-seung Lee (이현승), Ok-Sun Choi (최옥선), Min-Woo Nam (남민우), and Shin-Young Woo (우신영) are also worth referring to as they introduce cases of using poetry texts to enhance students' creativity.

Second, there are studies on social change achieved through literary education. Yun, Ho-gyeong (윤호경) emphasizes poetry education for citizens. Through civic education, students can learn compassion for others. They can have a critical reflection on the set norms. This paper explores the possibility of solidarity that students can realize along with critical consciousness through poetry education. Meanwhile, Yang, Kyung-yeon (양경언) argues that poetry education can foster more practical and direct citizenship when the concept of 'slow students' is considered and reflected in the classroom. The above paper

is a study of how all students can receive poetry education together without prejudice, while Yang's paper sets the ‘slow learner’ as the central actor and explores how all students can naturally relate to each other in the classroom.

Third, and finally, the student undergoes an inner transformation in the process of accepting the poetry text. Hyun-Ah Lee (이현아) and In-Ja Choi's (최인자) study analyzes literature lessons for self-care purposes. This is because the experience of empathy for others through poetry texts can lead to empathy for the self. Sang-Ah Lee (이상아) is interested in the internal changes that poetry texts bring about, centering on the concept of creativity. According to her, students can gain the experience of seeing their lives anew through poetry education. The poetic activities that students experience through literary education are connected to poetic concepts, and through this discovery, students can grow as creative beings and undergo a change in self-consciousness.

So far, this article has reviewed the previous studies, and this study belongs to the third scope of research. This study aims to explore the results of students' inner transformation through a new method of teaching literature. This thesis integrates the content of literature education and theater education within the curriculum of public education. This teaching method is distinct from the way it has been practiced in the past. In the past, the results of accepting and appreciating literary works were in written form. However, this curriculum understands and accepts Kim Soo-young's works and creates a new way of appreciating them in the form of a play. Students take on roles in the play within this class. As a result, they step out of the “I” and become the subject. Through this activity, students gain the experience of objectively exploring and understanding the other. This can bring positive change for their internal thoughts of themselves.

The following will detail the reallife class based on the above concepts. The class promotes creativity through literary works. Through these lessons, students can develop their creativity and

establish a new sense of self-identity. They can also overcome their own conflicts and pain caused by entrance exams.

A lesson is organized using the following steps. Fist, the students form groups. They read Kim Soo-young's poetry and prose, and go through the process of appreciation and analysis. Afterward, students discuss their impressions in groups and present these to the class. The instructor gives feedback on the results. Based on the feedback, students will compose a play script and perform it. Students watch the plays of different classmates together. They fill out an evaluation sheet and share it with the class. Students compliment and encourage each other's work. As a result, students develop their creative thinking and establish a sense of agency through classical literature. They experience friendship and a sense of community among their classmates.

2. The specifics of the actual lesson organization

This lesson is a Reading Classics lesson. This class is 50 minutes per session. The class consists of about 25 students, and there are four such classes in the grade. This paper focuses on one of them. The lesson plan for the 10th session of this class is as follows.

Table 1 : Lesson Plan

Class Information	
Subject name	Reading classic literature
Lesson Plan	
Course Overview	Students will be able to understand Kim Soo-young's literary works and use them to enhance creative thinking and develop agency.

Goals	(1) The learner can read and understand the poetry, fiction, diaries, and prose of Kim Soo Young. (2) Students will be able to appreciate and analyze literary works and write a review. (3) Through group discussion, choose a work of literature and re-create it in the form of play. (4) Students will be able to appreciate and evaluate the work of other classmates.
Books & Resources	Kim Soo-Young 2022. *The Essential Kim Soo-Young.* Paju: Mineumsa
Utilization Materials	PPT, E-BOOK, Video, photo

Weekly Lesson Plans	
week	Lesson Description
1	Organizing groups. Read and discuss the work of Kim Soo-young.
2	Select a favorite piece. Perform a reading of the work.
3	View and analyze Kim Soo-Young's work in groups.
4	Write a group reflection paper on the selected works. Make a presentation.
5	In groups, create a theater script for a selected Kim Soo Young work.
6	Edit and refine students' creations with instructors
7	Determine roles for a group play. What to bring. Music. Set up stage props.
8	Practice the script. Practice on stage.

9	Present the group's work as a performance.
10	Present the reflection paper. Remind students of the goals of the lesson.

This class ran for 10 sessions, totaling 5 weeks. The location of the class is the school library. There were five students per group, and they were free to choose their own group. This was intentional. First, it was important to develop the attitude of appreciating literary works together. Also, since the end goal was a play performance, there needed to be enough students to fill a stage. Group collaboration also reduces the pressure on students to create and present. Students can work in groups to generate ideas, communicate, and coordinate opinions to complete a collaborative piece. From there, students can decide what roles they can play in their groups and give and receive help. Once the groups were organized, they ran through the list below.

Student Tasks

1) Create a new name for your group.

2) Read a selection of Kim Soo-young's work and choose a piece of artwork as a group.

3) In front of the class, introduce and read the piece.

Two sessions were needed to accomplish the above lesson content. Students sat in groups and discussed. First, they named their teams. Then they read the poems or prose in the book with the other members of their group. They discussed their favorite pieces with the other members. In a normal language class, it was difficult for many students to participate in poetry appreciation because they had to prepare for exams for school and entrance exams. But in this class, everyone is free to express their opinions. The five groups were organized as follows

Table 2 : List of works selected

Team name	Selected work	Genre of work
G-Phoenix	“Journalist's Passion”	poem
Teamwork Genius	“By the Scallion Field”	poem
Mental Reform Team	“A Note for Poetry Writing I”	prose
Lighting is LED Light	“Sesame Flower”	poem
It's Awkward Now	“November 24th”	diary

The results above show that group names are experimental. It's a name that the group came up with together. This activity makes students feel excited about the class and aware that they are part of a group. The new community gives students a different sense of agency. They can participate in the class as a new subject. Students will work as a member of a newly created team, temporarily leaving their real names behind. As a member of a team, students can demonstrate an act of will in the selection of their work. The content of the lesson that this team will perform is carried out through the active will of the participants. Naming new teams and becoming a member of each team allows students to work together to solve the tasks of the class and perform actions as new “subjects.” (Minjung Koo 구민정 2020: 7) This can help them enjoy and feel more confident about learning poetry. It creates an active desire to collaborate with other students and participate in the class.

Next, let's take a look at the students' selections. The works the team chose are not commonly seen on college exams or in textbooks. The works they chose are new to them, something they haven't encountered before. They were also chosen because they were works that the students could relate to. Not only poetry, but also prose and diary entries. The instructor guided the class to choose the works of Kim Soo-young in an autonomous way. After the selection, one member of the group introduced the selected work in front of the other members and told them why they chose it.

The first work chosen by G-Phoenix is “The Passion of a Journalist” (*기자의 정열* : 70). They chose this work because they liked the title of the poem and were curious about the profession of a journalist. They also liked the vivid images of various situations surrounding a journalist. Teamwork Genius chose “By the Scallion Field” (*파밭가에서*: 108). They said the poem was lyrical and steady. Mental Reform chose Kim Soo-young's “A Note for Poetry Writing I” (*시작노트 1* : 390). It is an essay about Kim's famous poem “Waterfall”. They chose it because they found Kim's life story interesting. Lighting is LED Light chose “Sesame Flower” (*깨꽃* : 146). They chose this po-em because it is short and they liked the repetition of the lines. They also liked the rhythm of the poem. They found it easier to understand than Kim's other poems. Finally, It's Awkward Now team chose the diary entry, “November 24” (*11 월 24 일* : 413). They said they liked this piece because it was different from the other works in the selection as it told a specific story of everyday life.

After the students finished their presentations, the instructor and all the students complimented and cheered on each team. Afterward, the students discussed the selected pieces again, especially how they would perform the play. Because more time was needed, the instructor challenged the students to further discuss how the play would be performed.

Students need to meet outside of class to work on their assignments. They need to discuss how they will perform based on the piece they have decided on as a team. They have an initial discussion in class, but time is running out. Team members would meet after school or during lunch to work on the assignment and report back to the instructor with their findings.

The plans for the plays discussed in the groups were mostly unfinished. However, it was clear that students were actively participating in the group activity. They explained to the instructor the process of the play that their team was planning. They also asked questions of the instructor about points of concern for their team. For example, they asked if the play should include the entire poem, how to prepare the

props, and if they could wear school sports uniforms and use vests or hats to distinguish the roles. The instructor answered their questions and provided helpful notes. Later, students complete the play planning in the classroom and start to think more specifically about writing the script.

What's notable here is the change in students. They were very proactive and asked the instructor for questions and help. They also expressed their expectations and curiosity about the next lesson to the instructor. In traditional classes, most of the students do not ask the instructor questions because in a regular Korean language class, both the students and the instructor had to complete the set content within the set time frame. The instructor in traditional classes must prepare the class for the exam, so it is difficult for the instructor to check the students' individual needs. Under these circumstances, students can only participate in the class in a passive manner.

Therefore, it can be seen that the lesson plan for this lesson is designed to help students change their learning attitudes and internalization of the content. The lesson plan of this lesson has the following implications

The first is the part of the lesson that focuses on literature. Literary works have the potential to communicate with others and change human lives. Poetry texts, in particular, are more ambiguous and multivalent than other texts. Classroom poetry appreciation requires active reader participation. In this lesson plan, students are encouraged to actively ask questions, seek help, and address doubts with the instructor. They can also freely express their opinions to other students and listen to the opinions of other students. The poetry text becomes an object that actively mediates the learner's learning activity. Through poetry, students can objectively reflect on their feelings and establish their values through empathy and communication with other students. Through literary texts, instructors can lead students to exchange their lives, experiences, and imaginations in a positive way. (Yun, Hogyeong 윤호경 2017: 296)

The team structure of the class allows students to feel respected in their roles through group activities. This is because the class is designed as a class where students can form their own subjectivity through their own thoughts and ideas. In this way, the literary education designed in this study can help students develop their own subjectivity and pursue a positive "humanization" path. Such a teaching method can be a class that promotes creativity and subjectivity through personal respect and interest in students. (Yoon, Young-chun 윤영천 2009 : 110)

3. Lesson Goal: To recreate poetry or prose in a theatrical performance

Students worked creatively with their teammates to plan a pro-duction and then created the production through a theatrical performance in class. Students can understand the work through researching various information and materials, presenting and generating ideas, and revising them together to complete the work. (Minjung Koo 구민정 2020: 5-7)

In groups, students read Kim's texts together. They chose one of their favorite works and write a reflection and analysis. The instructor gave students a set amount of time to discuss with other members of the group. Students refined their arguments as they listened to others. Students develop the ability to listen to, understand, and reconcile different interpretations. Students are not active in presenting their poetry appreciation in a typical Korean language class because the class is focused on poetry theory rather than poetry appreciation. Such a teaching method has typically made students lose interest in literature classes. (Choi, Ok-seon 최옥선 2015: 342)

However, in the classroom cases analyzed in this paper, students showed a different behavior. The students were very active in

giving presentations and writing reviews. In this class, learning is not evaluated by tests and scores. What matters in this lesson is not how the students' grades are distinguished, but rather how their ideas and creativity are honored. Here's an example of a review that a learner wrote during a group activity.

Table 3 : Interpretation and Writing of Criticism

Reflection: This work expresses a "green onion field" where new sprouts break through the soil. By abandoning the old, one can gain new love. This poem paradoxically sings of enlightenment. Through reading this poem, I gained a deeper understanding of the poem "By the Green Onion Field." Analysis: There is a color contrast between the "red onion field" and the "green sprouts." This poem highlights vivid imagery and emphasizes its theme. It uses paradoxical expressions to assert new strength. The poem employs imperative endings. It portrays a life that seeks change through contrasting poetic words. The repetitive sentence structure is a notable feature, creating rhythm through repetition. -Analysis and reflection on "By the Green Onion Field," written by a student from Teamwork Genius
Reflection: I find this poem to be calm and quiet. The poet seeks to escape from certain desires. A sense of sadness is felt. Kim Soo-young wanted to protect himself. What Kim Soo-young sought to destroy was his own self. Greed is desire. Kim Soo-young wanted to destroy this desire. Analysis: Kim Soo-young's poem "Sesame Flower" was published in 1963. This poem is about "small and numerous sesame flowers / and the mind drifting to a distant end." The humble self is metaphorically compared to the sesame flower. This poem reflects Kim Soo-young's introspection on himself. -Analysis and reflection on "Sesame Flower," written by a student from Lighting is LED Light

Reflection: Kim Soo-young's poem "Waterfall" is famous. I really liked this poem. However, to write this poem, I was moved by reading the prose filled with the poet's thoughts. There is a sentence in this prose that says, "What we truly long for is peace." This sentence conveys the poet's strong will. When I traveled with my family, I saw a waterfall, and this poem came to mind.

Analysis: This poem effectively showcases the speaker's firm will. The line “the waterfall makes a straight sound” illustrates the strong belief the poet conveys through the image of the waterfall, which crashes down from above. However, it seems that Kim Soo-young wrote this poem with a very painful heart. In the prose, he mentions that he is weary from “the difficult years that collide with me.” Everyone finds it hard to live.

-Analysis and reflection on the prose "Beginning Note 1," written by a student from Mental Reform

The above are reviews written by students who organized their opinions with other members of the group and wrote their im-pressions and analysis of Kim Soo-young's work. Kim Soo-young views the world through a poetic narrator. The poetic narrator is not identified with the world. The poetic narrator feels pain about the world of the time. The poet denies the unreasonable situation of the world. This concept of 'negativity' is an important point in Kim's poetry from an aesthetic point of view. The subjects in Kim's poems have a critical consciousness of the times. The smallscale ‘subjects’ in Kim's poetic texts expand the sentiments and thoughts of negativity that they feel while experiencing ‘life’ and ‘society’ into poetic expressions. (Kim, Chi-jung 김치정 2015:100)

Students analyzed the characteristics of the narrator in Kim Soo-young's work. Students examined poetic sentences and expressions. One student commented that the poem shows “the realization that new love can be gained by letting go of the old, through a field of green onions with sprouts breaking through the soil.” Another said that Kim's poem is “a poem that looks back at the ‘I’” and demonstrates “ firm will” through the poetic subject.

In other words, students can discover the subjectivity in their own lives through Kim Soo-young's literature. Students will have the mindset to look at the times objectively. Through this kind of teaching process, students will be able to have a variety of thoughts. Students will communicate diverse ideas through poetry texts. Students will recognize their own agency as they experience group discussions and creative reading and writing activities. Students will appreciate Kim Soo-young's poetry and understand the poet's will to "go beyond the conflict between the outside world and the subject". (Nochul 노철, 2003: 123)

The class's "mind reform" team turned the prose from "a Note for Poetry Writing 1" into a theatrical story. First, students created characters and assigned roles. The group chose a member to focus on writing the play, and they discussed and created a script together. One member of the group decided to organize the props, lighting, sound effects, and background music for the play. One of the "slow"-designated students in the class was responsible for the sound effects and background music. This was a collaborative effort between this type of student and typically performing students. The team decided that one learner would perform the poem "Waterfall" as a physical representation. This student chose to express the poem through dance, with no dialog. While this student danced, another student read the waterfall poem by Kim Soo-young. The team created the following play.

Table 4 : A play script using poetry

Making Suyoung Kim's 'Starting Note 1' into a Play Characters: Man 1, Man 2, Woman 1, Woman 2 Props: Pictures showing the background of the bar, Dark, When I turn on the classroom lights, Man 1: (Silently dances a dance representing Kim Soo-young's poem 'Waterfall')

Man 2: (Recites the 'Waterfall' poem slowly)
The waterfall falls down a straight cliff without any sign of fear
A wave that cannot be defined
Without meaning to fall towards anything
Regardless of season, day or night
Like a noble spirit, it falls ceaselessly
At night, when neither the marigolds nor the trees are visible
The waterfall falls straight down with a sound
Straight sound is sound
straight sound
call a sound
Water drops falling like lightning
Without even giving my mind a moment to get drunk
As if laziness and stability had been turned upside down
Without height or width fall
Woman 1: (Snooping around in front of the bar and finds a friend.) Hey! It's been a while.
Woman 2: Oh! nice to meet you.
Woman 1: How is your life these days?
Woman 2: It's just like that.
Woman 1: Days of despair and pain. My mother is sick, and there is nothing to eat at home.
Woman 2: Oh my, it's hard for me too.
Woman 1: But let's not give up here.
Woman 2: Yes.
Woman 1: Did you see the man dancing in front of there?
Woman 2: Yes. It was fun.
Sound effect: Ordinary, peaceful sound. White noise.

-Performance based on "A Note for Poetry Writing I", written by high school students.

This lesson was designed to actively engage students in learning a poem and recreating it into a play. The students were interested

in the new way of teaching, which was different from the traditional language class. Creative lessons are an important motivator for students' academic development. As students participate in the class, they develop creative thinking, which has a positive impact on other academic areas. This is because students' creative classroom attitudes can be transferred to their enthusiasm for other academic fields. (Lee, Seung-yoon 이승윤, 2020 : 332)

The group who wrote the above script parodied a part of Kim Soo-young's work. They wrote the script based on Kim Soo-young's "a Note for Poetry Writing 1", but they added Kim Soo-young's poem "Waterfall" to the play because the content of the prose reflects the situation, emotions, and life of the poet when he created the waterfall. Therefore, although they built the play around Kim Soo-young's prose, it would be a very natural structure for the script to have the poem "Waterfall" appear within the play's content.

The performance is about 10 minutes for each team. Students individually perform their roles and realize that their work is respected. They also feel the sense of accomplishment of completing a piece with others. This classroom experience can be an opportunity for students to establish their own agency through creative activity. Students performed their own theater pieces and, just as importantly, watched the pieces performed by other teams. This makes them both performers and evaluators of their peers' work. This is a horizontal assessment where students evaluate their peers, rather than a vertical assessment where the instructor evaluates the student. Students write their impressions on the reflection sheet. They uploaded and shared their reflections on an online platform. The instructor and students would share their evaluations and impressions of the lesson together.

These outcomes unfold as a continuum of students' activities. The lesson begins with students' aesthetic and creative thinking and is realized through their participation and experience. Students discuss together to solve problems, synthesize their opinions, and finally perform. The above process of theater education creates a new approach

to the process of receiving literary works. As a result, theater education helps students develop positive feelings about themselves through artistic activities. (Minjung Koo 구민정 2020 : 10)

In short, this paper designed a creative lesson using literary works, and students could expand their own agency through creative class activities. Thus, creative classes can be a new way of teaching literature. It proves that literature and education are closely related to real human life. Creative thinking can be a positive trigger for students' inner and outer lives. Based on this, students can improve their lives and their studies. (Choi, Ok-seon 최옥선 2015: 346)

4. Conclusion

This study analyzed the actual classroom process in which students experienced creative lessons with Kim Soo-young's literary works. This lesson was an attempt to use literary works to teach reading in a new way. Through group activities, students created new team names and appreciated and analyzed Kim Soo-young's literary works. The results were presented to the class. They then created and performed a "theater" piece based on their findings. One of the team members took the lead in creating the script, and the other students participated in revising it. They also took on the roles of actors, props, costumes, lighting, and directors for the play. Students worked as part of a team to fulfill their roles.

Students experienced that their work was honored as they each played a role. They learned to be considerate of others and to cooperate with others as they went through the process of empathizing and coordinating their opinions. They also experienced the sense of accomplishment of completing a piece of work with other members of the group. Therefore, this lesson was an opportunity for students to establish their own agency through creative activities. It's important to note that the students get to perform their own theater pieces and watch

other teams perform them. In this way, students are not only performing their own work, but they are also evaluating the work of their peers. This is not a vertical assessment where the instructor assesses the learner, but a horizontal assessment where the learner assesses their peers. Students viewed other teams' work and wrote their impressions on a reflection sheet. They also wrote about how they felt or changed as a result of the class. Students uploaded their reflections to the online platform, and all students could share and empathize with each other's reflections. Teachers and students could also share their evaluations and impressions of the class together.

The instructor shared the reflections with the class and gave those who wanted to share their writing the opportunity to do so. Here's what they wrote

Table 5 : An appreciation of a class

Kim Soo-young's work is difficult. At first, I was unfamiliar with classical literature. But I liked the idea of naming our groups and introducing our favorite works one by one. I didn't practice much for the play. I didn't memorize my lines perfectly, but it was a very memorable class. -Lighting is LED Light team, student surnamed Park It was kind of cool when my friend danced to “waterfall”. Our group was the most active. It was a really free time. I played Girl 1, which was really fun. -Mental Reform team, student surnamed Kim

At the beginning of the class, students were not interested in Kim Soo Young's works because they are more familiar with video media than literary works, and students are under intense pressure to prepare for their grades and entrance exams. One speaker said, “When I first saw Kim Soo-young's book, I thought it would be difficult”. However, as the students participated in the class, they experienced a change. As they experienced the class with other students, they became interested in the class. She became more active and engaged in

the class. Another learner didn't have any close friends, so the group work was unfamiliar to her, but she found enjoyment and fulfillment in revising and perfecting the script with her teammates instead of creating it alone. One student reported, “I think it was a fun memory with my friends.” Another memorable theater performance was a dance performance of Kim Soo-young's poem “The Waterfall.”

Analyzing these results, we can see that Kim's poetry texts played an important role in mediating education with students who needed a new way of teaching. The students' inner transformation was triggered by Kim's work. The lesson was completed in an experimental way, breaking away from the usual way of appreciating poetry. Students not only wrote reflection papers after the performance, but also spontaneously approached other students and offered heartfelt encouragement. Students were able to empathize and connect with their fellow students in a way that is not just about grades. Notable was the fact that the students who studied separately at different levels were able to break down awkward boundaries and communicate for a while.

In summary, this paper explored a teaching method that utilizes literary works to promote students' creativity and agency. Through creative group activities, students were able to expand themselves in an active way. Especially nowadays, it is difficult for students to form interdisciplinary friendships with other students due to academic pressure. This is because the entrance examination system is competitive. However, through creative activities, the students experienced how to cooperate and care for other students and completed the lesson. The lesson described in this study can be a new way of teaching literature that is needed in this era. It proves that literature and education are closely related to practical human subjective life and creative thinking.

Conflict of interest statement:

The author states that there is no conflict of interest to disclose.

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IMAGE OF JOSEON WOMEN IN THE EYES OF EUROPEANS IN THE 19TH CENTURY: TRUTH AND MISUNDERSTANDING

BORAM HAN, PhD
The Department of History and Culture
Daejeon University, South Korea
96-3, Daehak-ro, Dong-gu, Daejeon, South Korea 34520
hanboram0924@gmail.com

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0598-9527

Abstract: This research examines the depiction of Joseon women in the eyes of 19th-century European visitors, juxtaposing it with historical records from Joseon itself, particularly Sabeobpumbo. European accounts, influenced by Orientalism, often portrayed Korean women as oppressed, passive figures. However, these narratives also captured moments where women exerted agency and autonomy, challenging stereotypes of submission. Through comparative analysis of European travelogues and Sabeobpumbo, the study highlights that women in Joseon played active roles in family and community life, often stepping beyond traditional boundaries. This nuanced exploration aims

to reveal the complexities of women's lives in Joseon, challenging both contemporary and modern misconceptions.

Keywords: Joseon Women, Sabeobpumbo, European visitor, Europeans' Records, Women's Roles

19 세기 유럽인의 눈에 비친 조선 여성의 이미지: 오해와 진실

초록: 본 연구는 19 세기 유럽 방문자들의 시각에서 본 조선 여성의 묘사를 조선의 역사 기록, 특히 《사법품보》와 비교하여 분석한다. 유럽인들의 기록은 오리엔탈리즘의 영향을 받아 조선 여성을 억압되고 수동적인 인물로 묘사하는 경우가 많았다. 그러나 이러한 서술들은 또한 여성들이 주체적으로 행동하는 순간들을 포착하여 순종적인 이미지에 도전하는 모습을 담고 있다. 본 연구는 유럽의 여행기와 《사법품보》를 비교 분석함으로써 조선 여성들이 가족과 공동체 생활에서 적극적인 역할을 했음을 강조하며, 전통적인 경계를 넘어서는 모습을 보여준다. 이러한 다층적 탐구를 통해 조선 여성의 삶의 복잡성을 드러내고, 현대와 당시의 잘못된 인식을 바로잡고자 한다.

핵심어: 조선 여성, 사법품보, 서양인 방문객, 유럽인 기록, 여성의 역할

1. Introduction: Unveiling the Imperialist Perspective

Since the opening of Joseon's port in the late nineteenth century, many Europeans including Britons, Germans, and French, traveled to Joseon. They documented their experiences and observations in travelogues, often focusing on the women of Joseon. These accounts frequently depict women as victims of societal inferiority, enduring isolation and patriarchal oppression, and being subjected to exhausting labor. Some even likened them to slaves. These views highlight the Europeans' limited knowledge and understanding of foreign cultures, stemming from the lens of Orientalism. It described the East as uncivilized from Western imperialist perspectives. However, the

Europeans also recorded instances that challenged the prevailing stereotype of submissive victimhood, such as wives who abandoned or even physically abused their husbands. As such, these travelogues provide a more nuanced and realistic perspective of Joseon society, informed by a range of experiences and perspectives.

While it is true that the Europeans' outsider status sometimes led to prejudice and misunderstandings about the reality of women's lives, their perspective could also be objective. Therefore, this research aims to examine the experiences of Joseon women in greater detail by comparing and analyzing the external perspectives of Europeans with the internal reality of Joseon society.

The accounts of Korean women by Westerners who came to Korea in the late 19th and early 20th centuries have been discussed in the literature. Some studies have examined the records of seven Westerners who visited Korea during this period, describing their impressions of Korea and Koreans, including notable content about Korean women (Finch 2012). Other studies have focused specifically on descriptions of Korean women in Western accounts (이배용 Lee 2002), while some have noted that the portrayals of Korean women created by Westerners were grounded in Orientalist discourse (김희영 Kim 2008).

More recent studies have noted that, although Western records were grounded in imperialist discourse, the narratives themselves showed inherent contradictions and ambiguities (강정구 Kang 2016). Research has also highlighted how Western missionaries documented women's subjectivities without stereotyping the status and lives of Korean women (김소영 Kim 2021).

Building on these existing studies, this paper seeks to examine the actual experiences of women in Korea by comparing European records from the late 19th and early 20th centuries with those from Joseon.

To undertake this research, the female-related records of nine European writers from the relevant period were reviewed. The primary focus was on examining the imperialist perspective evident in their

accounts and assessing the knowledge they derived from their encounters. I then distinguished between their firsthand observations and their preconceived notions upon entering Joseon. Furthermore, a comparative analysis was conducted by examining the recorded cases of women found within The Judicial Records, *Sabeobpumbo* (사법품보; 司法稟報).[1] This extensive collection of court records from Joseon provides a vivid depiction of women's lives that is rarely documented.

By combining these two sources, we can gain a richer understanding of the reality of women which has often been obscured due to limited documentation. Moreover, this research offers an opportunity to deepen cross-cultural understanding by examining the prevalent misconceptions that emerged during the initial encounters between Europe and Joseon in the late nineteenth century.

2. Differentiating Hearsay from First-Hand Accounts in European Narratives

European accounts of Joseon women often present contradictory statements. On one hand, they are depicted as marginalized and oppressed individuals without any rights and freedoms. On the other hand, they are portrayed as being safeguarded and esteemed within their social roles.

[1] *Sabeobpumbo* is judicial records from the late Joseon Dynasty to theKorean Empire (1894-1907) with details of various civil and criminal cases, testimonies from people involved, and sentences from the state. It is currently in the possession of the Seoul National University Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies. A total of 180 books remain, including 128 books of "*사법품보 (갑)*" *Sabeobpumbo* (*Gap*) and 52 books of "*사법품보* (*을*)" *Sabeobpumbo* (*Eul*).

2.1 Contrasting Narratives of Female Seclusion

2.1.1 Depictions of Marginalized and Oppressed Women

Europeans described women as lacking rights and freedom. They believed that women lived in isolation from the world, similar to social outcasts, and evaluated this as a barbaric custom. They mentioned that if a married woman disobeyed her mother-in-law, she would face harsh physical punishment, emphasizing the barbarism of the East.

Siegfried Genthe, a German journalist who visited Korea in 1901, wrote the following about Korean women:

> "What a disappointment European women must feel regarding the lives of Korean women! Here, women have neither rights nor freedom. They live secluded from the world like sinners and are more strictly regulated than the women of India, where the higher the rank, the longer they sit behind a curtain. When will this barbaric custom yield to a system of freedom" (Genthe 1905: 229)?

He wrote that Korean women live in seclusion and under strict regulation, with neither rights nor freedom, and he described these customs as barbaric. This perspective reflected the imperialist view of the East as barbaric, common among Westerners. However, while he lamented the so-called "barbarism" of Korea, he immediately followed with a positive portrayal of Korea's potential.

> "But even in this land of sleeping fairy tales, a new era is dawning. The Korean people, with their broad-mindedness and bright intellect, will likely be swept up in the wave of Western thought and institutions, perhaps even more quickly than their neighbors. During my last visit to a German school in Seoul, I was convinced that Korea would one day undergo rapid change. The thriving and developing

> German language schools are clear evidence of the limitless potential of the Korean people" (Genthe 1905: 229).

In Genthe's view, Korean women and the state of Korea itself were steeped in barbarism, yet his hope for Korea lay in its infinite potential for Western-style progress. Genthe's understanding and recognition of Joseon was confined to acknowledging the possibility of Western development, illustrating the limitations in the typical Western perspective on Korea at the time.

In the eyes of Europeans, who viewed Korean women as barbarically oppressed, marriage was seen as a primary means of subjugating Korean women. Emile Bourdaret, a Frenchman employed as a railroad engineer by the Korean Imperial Government around 1903, meticulously documented the Korean wedding process (Bourdaret 1904: 149-155). The Korean bride's appearance on her wedding day was portrayed as one of suffering, filled with oppressive elements.

The bride is dressed in elaborate attire, similar to the robes of palace noble ladies, and wears a large, inflated wig on her head, which is so heavy it nearly crushes her. She is unable to see anything during her wedding day, as her eyebrows are entirely glued down. She must endure the day as a "doll," unable to open her eyes, speak, or smile. As part of the ceremony, she undergoes a test: two women sit between the groom and the bride and say things so funny that they bring tears to one's eyes, to see if she will laugh. While the groom is free to laugh as much as he wants, the bride is expected to suppress any reaction, even an eyebrow twitch, lest she be judged as disrespectful. The test does not end there. When the ceremony is over and the newlyweds are alone, the groom loudly declares that he does not want to marry someone he cannot talk to or see. If the bride protests indignantly, the marriage is annulled. Bourdaret notes that such annulments due to the bride's reaction were not uncommon. Thus, the bride, who should be the main figure in the ceremony, spends one of the most important days of her life without being able to see, hear, or express herself in any way.

Even if a bride endures all these trials and proves herself "worthy" of becoming a man's wife, the path that follows is not a happy one, but rather one of greater hardship. The fearsome Joseon mother-in-law awaits her. As a daughter-in-law, she is expected to endure mistreatment for a long time, patiently awaiting the day when she, too, can become a mother-in-law. With very few exceptions, the bride embarks on a harsh, thorny path.

According to Bourdaret's account, Korean women of that era were like slaves, with no rights, and forced to spend their lives in abuse. But can any society survive if it relentlessly oppresses some of its members? The Europeans of the time not only failed to answer this question but also showed no interest in considering it, as Korea, in their minds, was simply a "barbaric" country in the East.

2.1.2 Portrayals of Protected and Empowered Women

However, the actual experiences witnessed by Europeans differed from these prevailing perceptions. Europeans depicted women in Joseon as one-sided victims, deprived of all the fundamental human rights to see, hear, and speak—everything a person should be able to enjoy. However, they also testified to a reality in which Korean women were respected in ways that are difficult for modern people to imagine. They observed that Korean women enjoyed a degree of protection and exercised a certain level of freedom. An instance was recorded where a man carried a fatigued woman on his shoulder after a prolonged walk on the street (Varat and Chaillé-Long 1994: 95). In addition, being a mother of a son granted women specific legal safeguards. For example, if the mother took extreme action against her son's persistent mistreatment, the law would provide her with protection. These examples show the honor and shelter they received within the family unit.

One of the most intriguing aspects of the respect given to women in Joseon was the existence of designated times and spaces where women could move freely. Europeans were particularly fascinated by the gender-specific nighttime curfew, which applied only to men. In Seoul, at sunset, a bell would ring, signaling everyone to return home, and travel was restricted until dawn. However, women were exempt from this rule. During curfew hours, they could move around freely without any restrictions. If they encountered a man, he was required to turn his face towards the wall to avoid looking at her.

In his description of Seoul's bell tower, Emile Bourdaret introduced the Joseon curfew system of *injeong* (人定) and *paru* (罷漏). From 1401, during the reign of King Taejong, until 1895, during King Gojong's era, the *injeong* bell was rung at sunset to signal the beginning of the curfew and the *paru* bell at sunrise to announce its end. Bourdaret explained that this curfew system, marked by the ringing of bells, was intended to allow women to move freely through the streets without fear of encountering unruly men, enabling them to roam as the true hostesses of the city. He described this and other aspects of Joseon as mysterious, quaint, and astonishing.

> "An hour after sunset, the bell rang twenty-eight times, signaling men to hurry home. If they didn't, the police would catch them, detain them overnight, and release them the next day only after administering ten lashes with a rod. The ringing of the bell was intended to open up the city for women. They could move about as hostesses in the city, if only for a few hours, without fear of encountering unruly men. At midnight, the bell rang thirty-three times, and soon the city gates reopened, signaling the start of a new day. Thus, this country was once shrouded in deep mystery, appearing quite strange. Its attire, customs, and beliefs were all remarkable" (Bourdaret 1904: 111-113).

Emma Kroebel, a German woman who arrived in Korea in 1905 as a protocol secretary to King Gojong, left the following record of the atmosphere she observed and heard about:

> "Until recently, men could wander the streets and public squares during the day, while women were only allowed to go out at night.

> For women who lived secluded and confined lives, nighttime was the only time they were granted the freedom to go out without the risk of encountering men. Although many of these restrictions have been relaxed now, women of the upper class still travel in covered palanquins when they must go out during the day" (Kroebel 1909: 204-205).

For Joseon women, who lived isolated and confined in their daily lives, nighttime was a time of freedom without the risk of encountering men. Considering that isolation was a defining characteristic of the image of Joseon women, the freedom they enjoyed at night goes beyond modern imagination. Although daytime belonged to men, nighttime was left as a time reserved for women. Men were expected to respect this time and space exclusively for women.

French folklorist Charles Varat's account captures the respect Joseon men showed for the time and space designated for women.

> "Women were not subject to this curfew, and if a man happened to encounter a woman on the streets at night, it was customary for him to turn his face towards the wall to avoid looking at her. Thus, the freedom to walk the capital's streets after nine o'clock at night belonged solely to women. Ironically, noblewomen, who would never show their faces in public during the day, could freely reveal themselves and breathe in the night air under the cover of darkness. After leaving this blissful freedom to the women, we hurried back to the embassy, where the night guard had already begun" (Varat and Chaillé-Long 1994: 95).

If a Joseon man found himself in a time designated for women, he was expected to be mindful of his presence as an uninvited guest. During the nighttime, if a man encountered a woman on the street, he would turn his face towards the wall to avoid causing her any discomfort, respecting her as the rightful presence of that time. The daytime scene was not entirely male-dominated either. European accounts reveal that women comprised about half of the public marketplace, and the number of women walking the streets of Seoul

far exceeded their initial expectations. Europeans also noted the polite and respectful behavior shown by men toward women they encountered on the streets.

The Neo-Confucian principles that governed Joseon society required each individual to fulfill their role within their designated place. Under this foundation, men and women were expected to remain committed to their respective roles. It was perhaps inevitable that Europeans, with their limited perspective, failed to fully understand the principles that shaped Joseon society. To them, Joseon appeared to be a society that barbarically oppressed women. However, the Joseon they observed firsthand also offered women certain freedoms of time and space. While these instances challenged the biases they held, they merely recorded these observations without attempting any further interpretation.

2.2 Contrasting Narratives of Women's Empowerment

2.2.1 Women as Passive, Servant-like Figures

Another European stereotype of Joseon women is that they do not have any authority. They explained that women were considered subservient to men like maidservants, and this mindset was deeply ingrained in the consciousness of society since a long time ago. In the eyes of Europeans, Korean women have consistently been subjugated to men, embracing discrimination as an inherent facet of their being.

Andre Eckardt, a Catholic missionary from Germany who came to Korea, documented his experiences staying in a common farming family in Korea in his book. He recorded his observations of the lady of the house as follows.

> "After about half an hour, it was already evening. The lady of the house—who didn't appear to be over 30, though her husband called her 'manura' (meaning 'kind old woman')—brought a small dining table into the room, carefully placed it in front of me, and bowed deeply, just like the children in the village school. When women bow, they slowly kneel, sit down, and respectfully lower their heads to the floor with dignity. She didn't say a word while bowing, as silence was considered etiquette for women.
>
> When I briefly expressed my thanks, she nodded once more, then backed out of the room. I was truly surprised to see even rural people observing such etiquette. This behavior was influenced by Confucian customs, or perhaps by *Ye-ghi* (禮記, *Book of Rites*), a classic text on etiquette related mainly to religious ceremonies. However, it also stemmed from an ancient mentality deeply ingrained in this society, which viewed women as subservient to men. Although democratic and political ideas like women's suffrage have begun to take root, this deeply ingrained attitude persists, especially in rural areas, even to this day" (Eckardt 1950: 94).

While observing the polite demeanor of Korean women, Eckardt noted that silence was considered a form of etiquette for them. Regarding this aspect of Korean women, he concluded that, for a long time, women in Korea had been regarded as servants to men, a mindset deeply embedded in the consciousness of the Korean people. He further commented that, even though Western democratic ideals had begun to emerge in Korea, the Korean attitude of looking down on women was ingrained to the core. According to him, Korean women remained confined to a low, servant-like status.

Mrs. Bishop, an Englishwoman, discussed the status of Korean women as follows.

> "Korean women have always borne the yoke. They accept inferiority as their natural lot; they do not look for affection in marriage, and probably the idea of breaking custom never occurs to them. Usually, they submit quietly to the rule of the *belle-mère*, and those who are insubordinate and provoke scenes of anger and scandal are reduced to order by a severe beating when they are women of the people. But in

> the noble class custom forbids a husband to strike his wife" (Bishop 1898: 143).

In Bishop's view, Korean women lived under a yoke, like oxen or horses. They accepted discrimination from men as a given and had no expectation of joy in married life. Furthermore, their passivity made it impossible to expect any initiative to break free from old, harmful customs. To her, Korean women were seen as beings who had to endure endless suffering, bearing punishment and abuse from their mothers-in-law without protest.

2.2.2 Empowered Women Sharing Authority

However, the Korean women that Europeans actually observed did not remain merely passive beings. The actual experiences of Europeans in the presence of women contradicted these stereotypes. They observed occasions where women wielded equal authority as husbands within the family structure. In this regard, Frenchman Charles Varat wrote the following.

> "The incident took place at a tavern called Saesulmak. I was suddenly jolted awake from a rare afternoon nap by an unexpected and terrible scream. I hurriedly opened the door and rushed outside, only to find several members of our party tangled up in a fight with some villagers, with one of them pinned down under one of our carriage drivers, struggling to get free. Realizing the gravity of the situation, I immediately grabbed the driver by the wrist, lifted him up, and threw him onto a pile of straw stacked in the yard. Then, I helped the villager on the ground to his feet. When I whistled, my interpreter and the two soldiers guarding me pushed through the angry villagers who were closing in and quickly surrounded me. I loudly asked who had started the fight. At that moment, I witnessed something I had never seen in China or Japan: the tavern mistress, displaying the full dignity of a country woman, boldly stepped forward and scolded our driver, declaring that he was the cause of all the trouble. …… The proud

> tavern mistress thanked me multiple times for settling the disturbance. As we left, I asked the interpreter how a Korean woman, who had been so shy and hidden when we first arrived, could step forward so confidently in the midst of such a dangerous situation. He replied that, since the incident happened while her husband was absent, she had no choice but to intervene, even if she might not have wanted to. He added that, in this country, even among the upper classes, women often exercised undeniable authority" (Varat and Chaillé-Long 1994: 132-133).

In this way, Charles Varat bore witness to the dignified manner in which Joseon women took charge of resolving issues in the absence of their husbands. The actions of the innkeeper at the tavern where he stayed during his travels through Joseon left a strong impression on him. When he first arrived, the innkeeper appeared shy and passive, hiding herself from view. However, when he was awakened from his nap by sudden shouts, the innkeeper's demeanor had completely transformed. The situation was as follows: a fight had broken out between one of his carriage drivers and a local villager. As Varat tried to intervene, seeing one villager struggling beneath a driver, he witnessed a scene he had never encountered in China or Japan. The innkeeper confidently stepped forward, declaring that the driver was at fault, and loudly scolded him, assigning blame. The driver, visibly unsettled, exhibited the typical nervous behavior of someone in the wrong. When Varat informed the villagers, through his interpreter, that he would dismiss the troublemaking driver, the villagers' hostility subsided. Once the situation was resolved, the dignified innkeeper thanked him multiple times for restoring order.

After the situation was resolved and they resumed their journey, Charles Varat was curious. He asked his Korean interpreter, "When we arrived in the village, the Korean woman seemed so shy and hidden—how could she step forward so boldly in the midst of such a dangerous situation?" The interpreter replied that since the incident had occurred in her husband's absence, she had no choice but to take action, even if she might not have wanted to. This testified to the fact that women in Joseon shared in their husbands' social roles and had an

identity tied to this joint responsibility. The interpreter also added, "In Joseon, even among the upper classes, it is not uncommon for women to exercise undeniable authority."

British diplomat Charles Campbell also had a similar experience. He recorded an instance where, upon entering a rural village in Joseon, he needed assistance from the village chief, but in the chief's absence, his wife stepped in to fulfill his role.

> "I usually relied on the village chief for help, and when I heard that he was absent, it seemed impossible to proceed on my journey. However, the village chief's wife stepped in for her husband, proving to be a more capable collaborator than even she might have expected. She was a splendid, full-figured middle-aged woman who commanded the porters on what tasks to perform, sent for additional porters in a hurry, and handled reluctant individuals with remarkable eloquence. She even offered makgeolli to several travelers stranded by the rain. She showed enough composure to extend her kind attention to a mud-covered foreigner and his dog, whom she had never seen before. I had been thinking that if these facts were widely known, the women of this region could hold higher positions in society and exert greater influence than previously imagined. The chief's wife only served to confirm this belief" (Campbell 1891: 138-139).

The wife skillfully directed the porters and mobilized the villagers to assist the foreigner by carrying all of his party's belongings to where they needed to be. Witnessing this scene, Campbell was astonished, asserting that "Korean women attained a higher status and exerted a greater influence than what might be expected in theory" (Campbell 1892: 252-253). These firsthand encounters shattered the prevailing myth of female subordination in the East, leaving Europeans amazed at the reality they encountered.

The Korean women that Europeans observed at the time were characterized by their sense of responsibility for the community and their authority as community members. They established their positions as key figures within their communities, sharing their husbands' authority, and taking over male roles seamlessly in the absence of their husbands. Joseon women were constantly striving to

stand as autonomous individuals within the bounds of their mobility. This effort was not merely directed toward achieving the ideal position expected of women in Joseon society, such as being a submissive and virtuous woman. Rather, they navigated and transcended boundaries to take on roles that society typically expected of men—serving as community leaders and practicing Neo-Confucian principles as proactive agents. Even though Europeans held preconceived notions, upon witnessing Korea firsthand, they accurately identified and documented this significant aspect of Korean women's lives.

3. A Comparative Analysis of Women's Roles in Sabeobpumbo (司法稟報) and Europeans' Records

3.1 Woman in Sabeobpumbo (司法稟報)

It is intriguing that the depiction of Korean women directly observed by Europeans is also found in the historical records of *Sabeobpumbo*. Many of the women depicted in *Sabeobpumbo* were far from passive or subordinate, aligning with the observations made by Europeans. Women represented their family members and pursued personal resolutions or legal actions, highlighting their role as active agents within their families (김경숙 Kim 2023; Kim 2016). A notable example is the case involving the family cemetery, where a woman took the initiative to solve the problem. When an unauthorized grave was secretly constructed near her father-in-law's grave, widow Noh took matters into her own hands. Carrying her young child, she personally dug up the grave and became a litigant in the case. While her male relative was initially accused, she testified that she was the one responsible, explaining that the relative was a feeble one who could not be deeply involved. The judge recognized and commended

Widow Noh's actions as a demonstration of filial duty despite the fact that she was a weak female. By actively addressing her family's challenges, she asserted her agency and sought recognition as a human being within society (*Sabeobpumbo*).

Another example is the case of Widow Jo. When a man named Gangju secretly built a grave near her family's ancestral tomb, Jo went to the site at midnight, dug up the grave, and revealed the coffin before surrendering herself to the authorities. The judge doubted that Widow Jo could have done this alone at night and ordered her male relatives to be brought in for questioning. This reflects the societal belief at the time that women could not be the direct agents of acts of retribution. Nevertheless, the women of that era demonstrated their agency by protecting their family's honor and positioning themselves as the legal representatives of their households.

Moreover, *Sabeobpumbo* also depicts women directly seeking revenge for their husbands or parents. For instance, in one case, the wife Seo went to the location where her husband's murderer was being investigated and personally stabbed him to death (Han 2022: 110-112). The judge regarded her act of revenge positively, acknowledging her strength despite being an ordinary woman. In another case, the Song sisters beat the ex-husband to death with a stick in response to his involvement in their mother's death. Once again, the judge viewed their actions as an act of justice in accordance with human decency, avenging their parent's enemy (Han 2022: 112-113).

These real-life cases demonstrate that women recognized themselves as active participants within the family community.

3.2 Common Testimonies in Foreign Records and Sabeobpumbo (司法稟報)

European visitors to Korea in the nineteenth century viewed the country through the lens of Orientalism, shaping their perceptions of

Joseon women based on preconceived notions of obedience and sensuality associated with the Orient. To them, Joseon women were naturally seen as victims of submission and discrimination.

However, a different story emerges when examining the diverse sources documenting that period, including foreign records and *Sabeobpumbo*. These sources reveal females in active roles as agents of their time. They shared authority and responsibilities within the family same as their husband, and, moreover, sought to establish their position as universal human beings by actively demonstrating behaviors traditionally associated with men, such as filial duty towards their biological parents beyond their in-laws.

The women, who played a significant role in history, were faithfully fulfilling their responsibilities within the reality they lived in. Society, in turn, accepted their roles. Moreover, they transcended the limitations imposed by society, continuously expanding their territory beyond the boundaries traditionally seen as male domains. The proactive and autonomous actions of these women were vividly described by European visitors who witnessed them firsthand.

4. Conclusion: The Imperialist View and the Limitations of Modern Perspectives

During the imperialist era of the nineteenth century, Europeans often depicted the Korean people as barbaric, viewing Joseon through the lens of European cultural norms. For this reason, they failed to recognize the distinct characteristics of the collective culture of Korea and the resulting differences in lifestyle.

Interestingly, similar limitations can also be found in the modern Korean perspective. Within a society where Western modernity has taken root, nineteenth-century Joseon is often perceived as anything but modern. Women, who were denied equal rights as men, were typically seen as passive, oppressed, and abused within

Joseon society. Modern Koreans cannot deny that they view their own traditions through a Western lens. For this reason, the true nature of women from the late 19th to early 20th century has remained largely obscured both in Korea and in the West.

However, the women documented in historical records tell a different story. They constantly fought for their identity as universal human beings. Moreover, Joseon society itself underwent transformations through the interactions with the activism of women. This research aims to uncover the realities of history that have shaped modern Korea and foster cultural understanding between Europe and Korea.

Conflict of interest statement:

The author states that there is no conflict of interest to disclose.

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BORDERLANDS: THE INSTITUTIONAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN *SZLACHTA* AND THE KOREAN *YANGBAN* IN EARLY MODERNITY

TOMASZ ŚLEZIAK, PhD (SOAS 2019)
British Association for Korean Studies
tomasz.sleziak@gmail.com (personal) /
615200@alumni.soas.ac.uk (institutional)

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1569-4442

Abstract: In this paper, the administration and dynamic cultures resulting from the disputed past, high ideals and challenges faced by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's and Korea's nobilities, along with their "Sarmatic" and Confucian frameworks are analyzed, with the evolving identities of Joseon's and Rzeczpospolita's *Szlachta* and *Yangban* social

strata, their respective opponents, and the pragmatic realities that affected their status and activities, being within the center of inquiry.

Keywords: Korea, Sociology, Nobility, Confucianism, Sarmatism, Poland, Lithuania

국경지대: 초기 근대 폴란드-리투아니아 슬라흐타와 한국 양반의 제도적, 철학적 자의식

초록: 본 논문에서는 폴란드-리투아니아 연방과 한국의 귀족들이 직면한 논쟁적인 과거, 높은 이상과 도전, 그리고 그들의 "사르마틱"과 유교적 틀에 따라 변화하는 조선과 르제츠포스폴리타의 슐라흐타와 양반 사회층의 정체성, 그리고 그들의 지위와 활동에 영향을 미친 실용주의적 현실을 분석합니다.

키워드: 한국, 사회학, 귀족, 유교, 사르마티즘, 폴란드, 리투아니아

POGRANICZA: ŚWIADOMOŚĆ INSTYTUCJONALNA I FILOZOFICZNA POLSKO-LITEWSKIEJ SZLACHTY I KOREAŃSKICH YANGBANÓW WE WCZESNEJ NOWOŻYTNOŚCI

Abstrakt: W niniejszym artykule przeanalizowano administrację i dynamiczne kultury wynikające ze spornej przeszłości, wysokich ideałów i wyzwań stojących przed szlachtą Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów i Korei, wraz z ich „sarmackimi" i konfucjańskimi ramami, z ewoluującymi tożsamościami społecznych warstw Szlachty Rzeczypospolitej oraz Yangbanów Joseon, ich przeciwnikami i pragmatyką realiów, które wpłynęły na ich status i działania.

Słowa-klucze: Korea, Socjologia, Szlachectwo, Konfucjanizm, Sarmatyzm, Polska, Litwa

1. Context Introduction

Among the most pertinent research questions concerning Central-Eastern European polities is the degree of "uncivilized" influences within their traditional cultures as opposed to the order of law, order and morality. "Barbarism" is a key concept within this discourse, embodying since Hellenistic times two distinct components: the otherness, and the threatening, alien presence, often associated with warlike attitudes. Ingrained in the collective doubts of Europeans since then, these ponderings have also often been varyingly scrutinized or embraced by the various cultures of the old world, in accordance with the stages of their socio-political development and the doctrines or philosophies holding sway over their populaces. Analogical doubts were visible among the inhabitants of North-East Asia, particularly in the region of Manchuria and Korean Peninsula, where the tensions between "barbarism" and Confucian heritage often ran high. The early (up to the early twentieth century) external observers-researchers of this area tended to frequently attribute multiple negative characteristics to the region's countries and aspects of their social order allegedly present throughout the ages. The "orientalist" (Gu 2013: 77-80) attitudes of Western scholars often embraced "slave state", "this-worldism" or "non-existence of capitalism" as factual phenomena, in their eyes negatively positioning East Asia, particularly the Sinophone areas, vis-à-vis the socio-political and economic achievements of Europe and America. The glocal socio-economic impact of this "Asiaticist" scholarly attitude could not help but be adapted by early-modern sociologists such as Karl Marx, who was strongly interested in the types of socio-economic organization ingrained in ancient Asian polities compared to pre-modern Europe, with the concept of "the Asiatic Mode of Production" (which, in essence, implied brutal domination of lower social strata and extraction of their life necessities by central administrative castes) being so often attributed to him—though this concept may have been subject to misinterpretation and undue

attention by commenters (Jorgensen 1995: 331).The particulars of these methodological disputes are of altogether secondary importance in the context of the present discussion. On the other hand, these perspectives indicate the tendency of scholars as well as the general populace to think in terms of regionalisms, placing a given territory and its inhabitants within a specific geo-political rationale to either denigrate them, or, conversely, to reinforce their perceived standing. As part of these processes, rationalization of a people's origin and chosen mode of life was more often than not predicated on exclusivist mythologizations or philosophies. Indeed, the terminological and pragmatic controversy pitting the tradition and legends against more traceable roots of a given country marks a field of inquiry bridging the interrelated disciplines of intellectual history and historical sociology. Consequently, the oft-limited concept of national consciousness comes into question, just as the fragmentation of historical narratives and ethnic alignments present a conundrum to scholars of early European societies, who frequently juxtapose the factual and assumed dynamics of state-building processes which occurred in geographic locales that did not possess cultural or genetic homogeneity, such as south-eastern Europe and the region of Caucasus (Tevzadze 1994: 437-438). Among the discussed issues are: Is ethnic cohesiveness real or merely an artificial, academic or social construct? Who were the "national ancestors"? Where did they come from? To what extent did tentative or imported national doctrines influence social stratification systems? In historiographic research on "national consciousness", the structure and ideological role of the upper echelons of a given society warrant attention, because in most cases, such elites have represented key societal segments capable of literary and artistic output, providing the (often understandably biased) record of their times, and of their own intellectual considerations.

This was certainly the case with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569–1795) and the Joseon (朝鮮) state in the Korean Peninsula (1392–1910). These countries, placed on the opposite ends of the Euro-Asiatic continent, at the first glance could

not have been any more different from each other. One gradually embraced war and conflict as a legitimate and just means of protecting secular and religious interests of the state, the other denigrated military occupations to the legally and philosophically lower strata of society and political activity. The Commonwealth was culturally and ethnically highly diverse, while Joseon was largely homogenous, with heterodox belief systems and political positions gradually becoming marginalized over the course of the Yi (李) family's reign. And, perhaps most strikingly, the Commonwealth was largely open to diplomatic contact with a variety of states, while Joseon expressed at the very least reserved, and oftentimes isolationist attitudes towards its relationships with states other than orthodox, imperial China. A researcher with no prior background in the matter may thus naturally speculate about the viability of a comparative research encompassing these two countries, and the academic purpose thereof. For the present study, the rationale is, however, clear, and predicated on their surprisingly analogical rise and growth—driven and represented by Commonwealth's and Joseon's respective noble strata—and the downfall caused by external factors compounded by internal weakening of the state and its institutions. Two powers, priding themselves on their self-exalted status as bulwarks against (perceived) barbarism or paganism and the chaos of the surrounding world which were ultimately forced to make compromises and question their identity and state conduct. Noble strata of high cultural ecumene existed in Western Europe as well, and both China and Japan also embraced Neo-Confucianism as the key guiding philosophy for their societies and politics, yet in Commonwealth and Korea the conceptual tension between high idealism and impure reality was especially high, emphasized by the close and significant military threats to their respective borders. The relationships, on the one hand, between the idea of the *Rzeczpospolita*—the Republic—and the heroification of the nomadic Sarmatians, and on the other hand, between the Neo-Confucian virtues and the mixed Korean-Manchu heritage (embodied in popular Gojoseon /Dangun [古朝鮮/

檀君] foundational mythologies, the-dynamics of pre-Joseon Goryeo [高麗] and Balhae [渤海] states with Southern Manchurian tribes and, from the seventeenth century onward, the Joseon-Qing conflicts and tributary dependence) in modern Korea's nationalistic contexts (Yun 2016: 1-9) present different, yet conceptually—philosophically and ethically—similar dilemmas, both to their contemporary inhabitants and to researchers. The concept of a "borderland" or "frontier" strongly applied to both the Commonwealth and Joseon. The traditionally "barbaric", yet unmistakenly brave Sarmatians recorded in ancient Roman narratives (Zaroff 2017: 233-260) and the ritual propriety Koreans even prior to Joseon era according to Chinese records (Vermeersch 2016: 105) constituted a source of cultural paradoxes in both the Commonwealth and Joseon. The former strived to characterize itself as a protector of Christian faith and an ally of the Papacy (Tygielski 1999: 49-65), and the latter pursued its reframing as a "Little China" (kor. *Sojunghwa* 小中華) (Lee 2010: 305-318), resulting in a paradoxical reframing of its formerly fringe alignment to the Han Chinese cultural ecumene into a faithful adherence to ritual standards of the orthodox Neo-Confucianism. This tendency for a "messianistic" national identity, coincidentally culminating in the seventeenth century both for the Commonwealth and Joseon, alienated many inhabitants and allies—internal and external (Głowacki 2014: 29-48) whose beliefs or ethnicities did not align with the changing credo of the two states in question. This sharp conceptual division between the barbarian past and its "cultured" reconceptualizations, combined with the "exceptionalist" attitudes, had no direct, contemporary equivalent elsewhere in East Asia or in Western European polities, perhaps with the exception of Hungarian and Russian heritages. In the latter's case though, the ideological consistency of pan-Slavism and anti-Westernism is comparatively dubious (Duncan 2000: 42-44) and disconnected from any specific referential point (or external polity) of cultural subservience or adherence (except for the state's and Russian Orthodox Church own dogma). This division is especially clear given the fact that in the

Commonwealth and Joseon Korea the cultural identity of their noble strata at the peak of their development (late sixteenth-early seventeenth century) typically did not translate into warlike activities against other nations - differentiating them from the Iberian Peninsula's Catholic states' Conquista/Reconquista - or into a rationale of an active, rather than defensive attitudes towards the "heterodoxies". An increased attention to these aspects of the highlighted states in global and pan-human contexts could hopefully be facilitated by this paper, especially as, philosophically, the self-perception of the Commonwealth's and Joseon's nobilities as "hallowed protectors" points towards the notion of socio-political exceptionalism, often discussed by analysts of the modern USA or the West in general (Moosa 2023: 1-7), though, once again, without explicit metaphysical undercurrents. Moreover, the notion of a "borderland" or a "barrier-state" warrants more of academic interest, particularly with regards to the process of identity-building among populaces of such areas. At any rate, the cultural force of the aforementioned tension was enacted or materialized in a multitude of ways. The Commonwealth's *szlachta* and Joseon's *yangban* (兩班) scholar-literati expressed their outlooks on their identity and attitudes towards the Other through private philosophical exchanges, petitions to the royal court, works of art, or educational schemes for their posterity. The textual body they left for posterity allows us to trace their beliefs, lifestyle and political acumen. It is therefore a surprise that no significant comparative analysis of the elites of these states has been published so far in Western academia, taking into account the above-described factors of the apparent nobility-barbarism dichotomies and exceptionalism motivated by ideological credo as well as their embodiments in the public and private engagements of *szlachta* and *yangban*. As such, certain methodological misconceptions are particularly notable, and must receive particular elucidation.

In any interdisciplinary research of pre-modern societies, including the present paper, the dichotomy between the historical and merely assumed origins of nations is a topic of prime importance.

Dichotomies themselves have often served as ideological mechanisms of controlling people and their narratives. Indeed, the unique and special characteristics which the upper echelons in Commonwealth and Joseon ascribed to themselves, to solidify their position as the highest and most exalted representatives of their respective nations, were based on various dichotomies, among them being "literacy-illiteracy", "conflict-civility" and "baseness-nobility". Similar ones are suggested in Ford's reading of Greco-Roman and Chinese histories concerning interactions with "barbarians". In his opinion, these oppositions may boil down conceptually to a sense of individual and group (including national) security, which necessitates a delineation of characteristics possessed by "Us", but not by the potentially threatening "Other" (Ford 2020: 106-108). Importantly, Ford refers to East Asian philosophical traditions regarding human nature, and their influence on early Chinese international politics, which equated the worst possible traits of otherwise "cultured us" as a collectively standard mentality and way of life of the non-Chinese "barbarian Other" (ibid.: 84-87). It must be remembered that, both in Western and East Asian contexts, "the Other" which is juxtaposed against the nobility has not always been an external invader; migrations and absorption of formerly "uncivilized" territories by new or expanding states subsumed the aforementioned "barbarians", in various capacities, by the "standard" populace. In this sense, it may be argued that even though civilizational progress occurs to stave off chaos and disorganization, "the Other" often associated with this chaos tend to be absorbed and reorganized under the newly-created (or adapted) administrative and intellectual frameworks. In short, the "high" and the "low" are inseparable in intellectual discourse, and the dialectic of socio-economic and philosophical development has necessitated some type of a response to potentially unsavory ancestors or foreign opponents by the state nobility.

In this study, the ways the described tensions were interpreted, integrated and intertwined by the Commonwealth's *szlachta* and the Korean *yangban* are elucidated as key components

of their respective consciousnesses. The roughly 300 years between the beginning of the sixteenth and the end of the eighteenth centuries are appropriate as the main time frame for this inquiry, as they marked a particular socio-political and cultural stage in the dynamics of the highest societal echelons of the Commonwealth and Joseon—countries which were oft considered, figuratively and literally, to be worlds apart. With their geopolitical alignments and national borders in flux, they were essentially positioned on the western and eastern fringes of the Eurasian steppe. Regardless of the geographic considerations, the aforementioned time frame was selected for this study for a number of reasons, and not without consideration of prior stages of Poland's and Korea's history.

The similar, and perhaps even culturally convergent developments coincidentally taking place in the Commonwealth and Joseon may be summed up in three key points. To begin with, the solidification of national institutions and the privileges of the *szlachta* and *yangban* scholar-literati reached their pinnacles in the first decades of the sixteenth century. Key events of this period included the death of the Polish monarch Jan I Olbracht (John I Albert r. 1492–1501), whose reign witnessed the initiation of the two-chamber parliament, as well as the disastrous expedition against the Moldovan associates of the Ottomans (1497). This period also saw the first purges of Confucian literati under Korea's infamously unhinged king Yeonsangun (燕山君; r. 1483–1495). These two occurrences, despite their disparate nature, eventually led to the reinforcement of the nobility's role in the economy, statecraft and wider society, as well as marking a stage in the development of the Commonwealth and Joseon in which privileged families became entrenched in their increasingly exclusive sphere of activity, ever more clearly separated from other social strata. These processes clearly, though not necessarily formally, constrained the formerly near-absolute power of kings, providing nobilities of Poland-Lithuania and Joseon with a framework in which they, and their beliefs, would largely determine the course of their respective monarchies, and not vice-verse, unlike the noble settings of Western

Europe. This was compounded by the end of the Jagiellonian dynasty in the Commonwealth and the institutionalization of the free election system, and by the Japanese and Manchu invasions of Korea from the end of the sixteenth century until the 1630s, with the Commonwealth's own conflicts with neighboring states (Sweden, Russia, Turkey) lasting more than 60 years in the seventeenth century.

The response of the two political entities to the foreignness of new ideas (such as the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, nascent Western empirical sciences and various modes of rationalism) coupled with the fear and sense of moral or military responsibility to protect against armed and political threats and their alien values, shaped the intellectual and religious environments in the Commonwealth and Korea, culminating in the buildup and strengthening of their national identities and reinforcing ideological isolation.

Last but not least, postulates for economic, social and technological reforms, inspired by the real and perceived weakening of state organization, gained traction both in Joseon and the Commonwealth in the eighteenth century. These postulates, or criticisms, were usually aimed at the nobility or more generally the social strata holding power, their political conduct and conservative outlooks being blamed for the their state's backwardness and unpreparedness for challenges. The main socio-political and economic difference at this point lies in the fact that, unlike Korea, the Commonwealth did not survive these reform attempts as a sovereign entity, which in its case took place against a backdrop of rising Russian, Prussian and Austrian dominance, and the partitioning and eventual disintegration of the state's territory, and with it, the dissolution of the independence and political influence of the *szlachta*. Meanwhile, the reigns of the enlightened monarchs Yeongjo (英祖; r. 1724–1776) and Jeongjo (正祖; r. 1776–1800) marked both the peak of late Joseon's culture and a downward socio-economic slope; subsequent monarchs could only rudimentarily attempt to stabilize the internal chaos of increasingly frequent

natural disasters, popular uprisings and the attempts by Western powers to invest in Korea on their own terms. All of these factors point towards surprisingly analogical circumstances of the Commonwealth and Joseon. The ideology of Sarmatism in the Commonwealth as well as the exclusivist nature of Korean Neo-Confucian orthodoxy after the Japanese and Manchu invasions, would be inherently tied to both the romanticized or denigrated remote national past as well as contemporary political borders and alignments. These sentiments would, similarly, undergo scrutiny within the following 200 years or so, in accordance with the rise of critical sciences in the West and the East and the subsequent increase of social diversity in the countries in question. At any rate, these wider philosophical or cultural trends and their noble purveyors found a natural haven and mode of expression in the institutions of national governance. Consequently, the key matter to discuss, which embodies in itself the spirit of this paper, is: What was the role of "borderland identity" in shaping of the topmost social strata in the Commonwealth and Korea, and how did the nobility frame and cement its traditional underpinnings as well as their dominant and numinous position in society vis-à-vis the various "Other"?

2. Origins and Basic Organizational Functions of the *Szlachta* and the *Yangban*

The Polish-Lithuanian *szlachta* and the Korean *yangban* were, in purely pragmatic or materialistic terms, quite similar. Specifically, an extended family having control over an economically significant and officially affirmed land, typically secured through a measure of private military power, would be seen both in Central-Eastern Europe and in Korea as representatives of a privileged status group. On this point, scholars such as Martina Deuchler have indicated that the actual roots of the *yangban* stratum are not to be exclusively

found in the dominant Confucian doctrine in Joseon era or even to graduates of official examinations in Goryeo (918–1392), but could be traced as far as the United Silla (新羅; 668–935) and its local powerholders originally delegated by the state to local areas for purposes such as coordination of farming activities, taxation or mustering of troops; above all, Deuchler's research conclusively proves that it was in the Silla period that Chinese-style surnames indicating particular lineages were formally adopted by the majority of people in the upper echelons of society (Deuchler 1992: 84-87). These power-holders eventually gained a degree of autonomy from the state, though their domains never truly approached actual independence or resembled medieval Europe's *feudum*. Moreover, scholars have established (Duggan 2000: 1-13) that the basic structures and methodologies of feudalism have their source in ancient Rome, though it remains an important question whether codifications of the socio-political order of this type over the ages possibly represent mere affirmations and enforcements of a developmental stage common to all of humanity throughout history, with complex regional variations, or if feudalism had its exclusive roots in European antiquity. In essence, this means that the framework of the "feudal state" proposed by Karl Marx as supposedly prevalent throughout the majority of pre-modern and early-modern East Asia has little substance to it, and many generalizations—social or political fragmentation coupled with top-down inter-class dependencies—may have been prevalent throughout history, but the actual particularities of socio-political interactions naturally varied.

As far as social, rather than political processes are, concerned other dynamics of territorial domination were discernible both in Europe and Asia, including lineages and clan identities tied to the inhabited land or a place of origin via a foundational narrative. Interconnectedness of interests on the basis of distinct family ties, coupled with the dissolution of large kindred groups was probably the actual norm developed in late pre-modern Europe, approximately from the twelfth until the fourteenth century (Bloch

2004: 138-140), and within roughly the same time frame in the Korean Peninsula. As such both the powerful landholders and the lowly tillers could over time display direct or obscure genetic links to the throne, though the actualization of that potential hinged upon the level of literacy, affective networks and economic standing. Oftentimes, the actual social freedoms and the degree of mobility were higher and more inclusive than popular narratives tend to imply. Norman Davies notes on this point that in medieval Poland, institutionalization of slavery was rather weak, discrediting the "slave state" stage within Marx's assumed universal methodology of progress (Davies 2005: 12). In purely institutional terms, *feudum* certainly played a key role in the formative stages of the *szlachta*. Service to the sovereign and the subsequent official acknowledgement by them was particularly important in the initial solidification of noble privileges, and the possession of land signified a stability of livelihood coupled with traits such as legal immunity. In Korea, from the Goryeo era onward, land or a geographic location came to signify not only a noble family's source of economic income (through its own value as well as the labor of the rural dependencies), but also, should a clan grow and become more widespread, a potential (often mythical or speculative if no clear historical records existed) place of origin—an ancestral seat (Deuchler 2015: 10). Although European nobility regularly marked their real or tentative place of origin—sometimes through particularly construed surnames—it was only in the gradually Confucianized Sinophone Asia, and especially Joseon, that the ancestral seat gained quasi-religious connotations, with multiple clan branches meeting together periodically at the designated place for ancestral and key seasonal rituals. This mode of delineated familism has survived in Korea into modernity despite the legal disappearance of the *yangban* status. The Western European nobility, in its formative stage, approximately in the seventh century AD, was already marked as a relatively closed super-stratum, placing great stress on non-base birth and exogamous, rather than endogamous marriages, though questions concerning coherency of its ethnic

origins, coherence of customary practices and the role of service to rulers and state institutions (as the possible determinants or signifiers of long-term noble status) remain (Fouracre 2000: 17-19). In many cases, construction of the notion of the "noble" accompanied its' differentiation from the "base", though not necessarily in a proactive manner. Once again, the anecdotal narrative accusing medieval Western European nobility of exploiting their dependent villagers (etc.) must be carefully reassessed; the non-nobles or even "ignobles" were by default predisposed towards less preferential treatment by the law and state functionaries precisely because their speech, clothes and dwellings were usually coarse and much less prominent than those of the well-fed and (at least externally) physically stronger nobles (Reuter 2000: 85-97), though this did not equal exploitation per se— it could have been merely a facilitating factor. These dynamics and differences in lifestyle may be compared with the Joseon-era culture of the *yangban* scholar-nobility, which, interestingly, prescribed extravagance and opulence in dressing code, practical appliances (including styles of porcelain vessels) and interpersonal conduct; these points were raised even at the royal court—where members of the *yangban* served—with such esteemed individuals as the first counselor Yi Jong-Song (李宗城; 1692–1759) correlating unnecessary expenditures on the part of the state with disturbances among the people and decrease in the "Great Unity" (kor. *Daedong* 大同), an important aspect of Confucian philosophy (*Yeongjo Sillok* 1734/8/15). The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's *szlachta*, on the other hand, valued personal freedom and, as we shall see further on, was characterized by its disdain towards servitude to the state, directly at the court and separated from the land. The *Szlachta* nobles, , through a narrative idealistically popularized in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, for the convenience of the newly created union between Poland and Lithuania, approximating an overarching "foundational myth" for the partner states (Maciejewski 1974: 13-42), promoted themselves as direct descendants of the ancient Sarmatians, in spite of the latter's non-Slavic and non-Baltic

cultural identity, not to mention the apparent dichotomy between the highly esteemed Western Roman values and the "ends of earth" provenance of the ominous riders, who, in the first centuries CE, posed a direct threat to Rome (Cunliffe 2019: 57-58); furthermore, the presence of Sarmatians as integral components of historical Polish or wider Polish-Lithuanian-Russian societies of the Commonwealth has not, so far, been attested by archeological evidence, despite the key role of this dubious mythology in providing a collective identity to this vast state (Marcinek 2011). It must be noted that the anthropological data on the relationship between native Koreans and the Manchu tribes is far more conclusive than the possible ties between the Slavic states and ancient Sarmatia—nevertheless, in Korean traditional narratives, the tribes living beyond Mount Baekdu (백두산) were invariably considered to have little to no actual culture. On the other hand, the Balhae state that formed in the northernmost parts of Korean Peninsula as well as Manchuria in late seventh century following the downfall of Goguryeo and lasted until 926 has long had a contentious standing among Korean historians (both in Joseon era and modernity), as the prevalence of Korean cultural components vis-à-vis those of proto-Manchurian tribes and the Chinese is particularly wrought with uncertainties in this case (Kim 2016: 248-257). Thus, the origins of noble strata—ideological, material and —geographic - were indeed convergent on a collective sense of idiosyncratic honor, historical pedigree and outward wealth contrasted against poverty, simplicity and lack of ancestral history.

In Poland, through the gradually increasing perception of one's land being an intimate familial property, as opposed to being granted in the past to one's ancestors for their knightly services to the Crown, a *szlachta* noble considered himself as an impressive individual in all ways (regardless of his actual economic status) and tried to maintain it without pandering to the ever-weakening kings and their courts, unlike his Western European colleagues. When these French, German or Italian nobles referred to their potential origins in "barbarian" tribes, it was a sporadic occurrence, and

elevation of the cultural or military standing of the "uncivilized" Germanic or Celtic peoples was not exclusive to the upper echelons of Western European societies; over time, entire nations built awareness of their predecessors (real or assumed), priding themselves on this legacy. A Polish *szlachcic* noble, on the other hand, basked in this sense of cultural uniqueness. To him, only the *szlachta* nobles were fit, physically and ideologically, to represent the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The peasants and the city-dwellers were assumed to have little of the Sarmatic identity, if at all—in a sense, they were not actual citizens. This attitude, in Poland, had a direct antecedent in the behavior of dukes and their "knight" allies, from the late twelfth until the fourteenth century, when, often under pretense of law, they performed "service" for their lords through the application of force on other feudal domains and the insubordinate populace (Górecki 2000: 115-155). Knightly honor, perhaps, was a façade of this behavior, and armed excursions were justified as pious in nature, as was the case elsewhere in Europe whenever the defense of Christian communities against various "pagans" gained traction among local populaces, at the formative stages of the "antemurale" credos, but before Sarmatism's methodologies took hold in the Commonwealth. In this context, the conflict between Poland/Lithuania and the Teutonic Order for the moniker of the Defender of Christianity, coupled with the diplomatic efforts of the former towards the vilification of the latter is notable (Tazbir 2004: 10-13). In fact, the relative distance between Central-Eastern Europe and Rome made Poland's claims of its honorable struggles against the Turks or Muscovites dubious in the West and the South (ibid.: 20-22), perhaps reinforcing the internal and international perception of Poles and Lithuanians as not-quite-Christians, or quasi-barbarians. Overall, the conceptual role of barbarians and pagans in the shaping of Europe's institutional and socio-political environments is difficult to trace beyond the Commonwealth and its eastern and south-eastern neighbors, beyond the medieval era, and beyond certain aspects of the Counter-Reformation movement. The knights and the nobles of Poland and

Lithuania were obviously the dominant political stratum within the rising Commonwealth,—and this state of affairs reinforced *szlachta*'s ego and derogatory treatment of "non-Sarmatians", even though, as noted above, the actual instances of exploiting non-elites should be analyzed case-by-case. Contrarily, the relative ethnic homogeneity of Koreans through the ages did not predispose the *yangban* or their predecessors to separating themselves (the Silla-era "bone rank system", despite its name, being a rather standard stratification system, dividing society on the basis of largely in-born rank and function) (Deuchler 2015: 19) from the larger populace or other nations on the basis of their perceived origin and blood ties. A doctrinal variant of international exclusivism eventually came to be practiced by the *yangban*, motivated by the downfall of what was seen as "Confucian Orthodoxy", and consequently of philosophical authority in China proper following the establishment of the new Manchu dynasty (Kalton 2019: 31). At any rate, the political, cultural or military power embodied by Polish-Lithuanian and Korean nobility predisposed these social strata towards playing a decisive role in the formation and day-to-day functioning of national institutions: the civil apparatus, the legislature, the national defense structures, but also the intellectual force emanating from the royal court. The main differentiating factor between the discussed types of nobility is that in the Commonwealth, the *szlachta* considered itself, by birthright, to be largely free from the majority of obligations towards state institutions, such as any new taxes enforced without government's (*sejm* or *sejmiki ziemskie*) explicit approval, though in particularly hard national circumstances such as those of the seventeenth century this rule would be periodically set aside (Kopczyński 2019: 74-75); while in contrast the *yangban* had a strong sense of responsibility for ethical education, passing civil (or more rarely, military and technical) examinations, and virtuously serving and advising the king, who was seen as the moral and ritual lynchpin of the nation; the royal court as well as the six ministries, official academies and various tribunals were considered among the most proper places where a noble scholar-literati aspiring to become

a "sage" should seek employment. Compared to the earlier "Renaissance" model of teaching, rote by-the-book learning gave way to "Baroque" upbringing, placing psychological and moral considerations in daily conduct at the forefront (Grzybowski 1996: 9-10). In the Commonwealth, and especially in the seventeenth century, the discussed father-led familial education amounted to training in basic Latin—the *lingua franca* akin to how classical Chinese was viewed in Korea—and an introduction to military know-how. Furthermore, the local schools in the Commonwealth, which were usually administered by the Church, constituted the second stage of education in Central-Eastern Europe; in Joseon Korea's provincial educational facilities (typically called *Hyanggyo* [鄕校] or *Seodang* [書堂]), the curriculum typically consisted of Confucian ethics and the recitation of ancient classics, in addition to rituals for sages and worthies of old (Kim 2010: 27-28). Despite these relative similarities, the actual values espoused by the *szlachta* and *yangban* differed significantly, especially in their public or administrative contexts. Additionally, the militaristic component of Sarmatism stood in stark contrast to the civil, high-minded and refined preferences of the Neo-Confucian scholar-literati. The details of these divergences form the next step of our discussion.

3. The Self-Perceived and Factual Socio-Political Roles and Privileges of the Nobility

Although in both the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Joseon Korea the noble strata of society formed comparatively early, the late fifteenth and the entire sixteenth century may be given special attention, as a possibly convergent stage of their evolution and the point of departure for dynamic and problematic developments the discussed polities underwent in the subsequent centuries. In both cases it was a golden age of history that essentially embodied a short

socio-political respite preceding a period of decline and conflict. It marked the development of humanistic sciences in Poland and Lithuania, and perhaps the formative peak of Confucian ritual ethics in Korea. Strict societal divisions started being enforced in both polities, and the formerly substantial autonomy of the commoner farmers, along with the role of women within the family and in wider society (Wyczański 1965: 269-271), witnessed a visible curtailing. Furthermore, the legal and political developments within this time frame established relatively thorough foundations for the dominance of the nobility in matters of the state. In Korea, the finalized version (Jung 2013: 182) of the dynastic code in 1485 (the so-called *Eulsa Daejeon* [乙巳大典]), and in Poland the *Nihil Novi* Constitution (which forbade kings from issuing new laws without consent and input of nobility) of 1505 simultaneously stabilized the state while also paving the way towards the virtual sanctification of the hold which the nobles had gained over their kings—in favor of the former's class- and status-based interests, including a wide scope of legal immunity (Sucheni-Grabowska 1988: 2). To clarify, unlike in the Commonwealth, significant power-stripping of kings was never presumed in Joseon as their privileges were significant despite the periodic tensions between particular kings and the *yangban*; moreover, the central government formally exerted fiscal and administrative influence on the countryside, becoming entangled in multi-factor relationships with the local populace (Karlsson 2006: 214-219).

At any rate, all costs of affirming oneself as the member of public society were steep both in the Commonwealth and Joseon. In the Korean Peninsula, the ethical aspects of social stratification exerted particularly strong influence on economic opportunities in daily life. In short—regardless of whether one was a nominal free farmer, or a public or private "slave"—a menial worker, foot soldier, or land tiller represented a basic unit of physical labor for which the *yangban* normally considered themselves ineligible, similar to their position on profit-centric mercantile activities. The scholar-nobility provided the state with philosophical expertise and moral

underpinnings; the actual sustenance and practical service was the duty of the "Other". The king's proclamations, his decisions and, conversely, the limitations placed upon his conduct were translated into the fruits of pragmatic administrative work by virtue of the monarch's relation with the multitude of institutions. In particular, the censorate, inspectorate and advisory bodies (*Saganwon* [司諫院], *Saheonbu* [司憲府] and *Hongmungwan* [弘文館]), collectively known as *Samsa* (三司; literally "three departments) and created after 1438, were meant to ensure that the country or its rulers do not fall into absolutism, moral negligence or barbarism. The fact that much of the internal, or background work of these bodies was done by non-elites or *jungin* (中人) "middlemen" specialists, and that the *yangban* readily dismissed any direct involvement in such "petty matters" was an obvious aspect of social stratification in the Joseon era. Likewise, other than the clergy, it was the *szlachta* that held within its grasp the majority of state offices in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The king of this nominally two-state country by himself constituted one of the parts of a single deliberative structure called *Sejm Walny*, having to cooperate with the Senate and Chamber of Representatives (*Izba Poselska*); each component of this structure had uniquely designated prerogatives and powers. Unlike Joseon, the Commonwealth was much more decentralized. Consequently, the status and the wider interests of *szlachta* (in this political sense interpreted as individuals of noble birth) not only dominated *Sejm Walny*, but also regional organs of deliberation called *Sejmiki Ziemskie*. The successive monarchs were viewed implicitly by the law, popular custom and explicitly by the *szlachta* as "the first among nobles" (Grzybowski 1996: 29-30), indicating the close connection between the aristocracy and the nobility; in theory, any member of the *szlachta* could be declared a king during a Free Election. *Artykuły Henrykowskie*, named for the agreement between the Commonwealth's nobility and the first freely-elected king, Henryk Walezy (Henry III r. 1573–1574) — a devout Catholic—delineated the limitations placed upon kings, who were expected to safeguard the interests of *szlachta* and not trespass upon

their "golden freedom". Among the key aspects of these Articles were the *szlachta*'s personal immunity in the face of law, the right to form political confederacies, the *liberum veto* (the right of noble individuals to protest and immediately bring an end to any legislative session) and the right to rise against the monarchy in case of its unlawful actions. Interestingly, and in line with aforementioned details on the religious freedom in the Commonwealth, was the right of the *szlachta* to choose their credo as per the Warsaw Confederation of 1573. Janusz Tazbir notes that the demands of the *szlachta* on Walezy, other than the affirmation of previously legislated privileges, also included the legal conceptualization of the future of the Commonwealth as a religiously neutral and/or tolerant political entity, which required much diplomatic maneuvering (Tazbir 2009: 88-95).

By the end of the sixteenth century, to secure their interests, both the *szlachta* and the *yangban* either entrenched themselves in political camps or retreated to their respective landed properties. The survival strategies of nobles varied depending on the perceived threats to their positions. The aforementioned importance of land (preferably, for *szlachta*, outside of city walls or centers of royal power) was reinforced by both the desire to virtually own villages and rural infrastructure as the means to familial sustainability and prestige—and to remain separate from the royal court and bourgeoisie. During hard times, the size of the property and its agricultural output clearly distinguished those well-to-do *możni* ("affluent ones"; major landowning and politically influential stratum from which the omni-influential and even less monarchy-dependent *magnateria* separated in the sixteenth century) who managed to secure their livelihoods through significant political power from the middle *szlachta*, not to mention the landless farmers or "plebs" (Wyczański 1965: 216-217). For the *yangban*, too, land quality, familial prestige and connections mattered deeply, as they were the primary signifiers of lasting noble status; nevertheless, while servitude towards the state and its ruler remained generally in vogue throughout much of the dynasty, the particulars of political or literary career were subject to much

corruption and amoral competition. As such, esteemed scholars in the vein of Yi Hwang (李滉; 1502–1571) cautioned their disciples, at times recommending spiritual seclusion in nature as a viable alternative to cynical "rat race" in politics and administration (Deuchler 2015: 177-181). As market opportunities and status fragmentation grew after the Japanese (1592-1598) and Manchu-Qing invasions of Korea (1627-1637), economic reality started to knock at *yangban*'s doors, a typical Confucian scholar-noble otherwise shunning personal engagement in money-making. Similarly, the snowballing economic impact of war against Russia (1609-1618), Cossack uprising (1648-1657), Swedish invasion (1655-1660) and Polish-Ottoman war (1672-1676) led to a wide-ranging pauperization of the entire Commonwealth. Thus, both the Polish-Lithuanian *szlachta* and Joseon *sadaebu* (士大夫; esteemed scholars; an alternative term for *yangban*) strived to balance their day-to-day essentials, while focusing on "higher" pursuits, at least conceptually. Their respective mindsets, in the former's case largely derived from the combination of Sarmatism and Catholicism and in the latter's case from increasingly nationalized reading of the Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy, found public embodiments in the state institutions to which the nobles had legalized or implied predispositions, regardless of the actual relationship between the "center" and the "periphery".

The noble strata in Europe and Asia alike have not only pursued ideological strategies of survival meant to simultaneously maintain the cultural cohesiveness and unity of its economically disparate members, but also made active efforts to safeguard themselves against status groups that could pose a distinct challenge to them. Although the cultural force carried by the bourgeoisie and the *jungin* middle-stratum specialists was discernible, neither they nor rich peasants could gain true clout in the public sphere comparable to actual nobles. As far as the topic of serfdom is concerned, the connections between inter-class dependencies and geographic divisions as well as the resulting discriminatory practices are clearly visible in both Polish and Korean history. To begin with,

the degree of legality and the range of these practices is a key matter to analyze. For example, it is very difficult to fully discern whether slavery existed in the Commonwealth – certainly, as Norman Davies believes, it was not institutionalized. The closest and most vilified approximation to slavery was *pańszczyzna* ("lord's work"), which was a burdensome, unpaid labor allotted to all tenant farmers living on a noble's land. Eventually it would cover all peasants living in a given area, with significant free hand given to the nobles in setting the rules of regulations. Notably though, while it was the king Jan Olbracht, who "tied" the peasants to the land (with *Piotrków Statutes* in 1496), and king Sigismundus the Old who increased the days of *pańszczyzna* from a few days per year into few days per week (in 1520), the reality was that the landlords could essentially force their associated peasant households to work even ten days per week, which typically was covered by peasants hiring paid replacements, whenever the family members could not bear the burden (Rauszer 2020: Chapter 1). Once again, though, it was more of an individual, rather than systematic burden. Regardless of this state of affairs, runaway peasants became a common phenomenon despite severe punishments, Ukraine (the name of which, interestingly, could be interpreted as "fringe land") was one of the most popular destinations given its vastness and, for most of its history, the relatively weaker influence of the Commonwealth's nobility. The desire to control Ukraine's populace, was, however, strong, and its resistance exacerbated by the predominantly Orthodox Christian credo of Ukrainian's peasants and Cossacks, who, especially after the disastrous (for the Commonwealth in the long term) uprising by Bohdan Chmielnicki in 1648, became closer to Russia. In Korea, the lowborn sub-stratum of *baekjeong* (白丁) even came to be associated with the northern migratory *orangkke* (오랑캐; barbarians) due to their lifestyle and unclean occupations: butchers, leather makers and base entertainers. Given the fact that by the fifteenth century any attempt at recovery or re-incorporation of former Goguryeo/Balhae land became an unrealistic affair and to reinforce taxation as well as other tools of social control, the

government of Joseon frequently postulated integrating such wandering segments of society into the commoner stratum or to recruit them as soldiers (*Seongjong Sillok* 1475/4/12). A "slave-proper" sub-group of *baekjeong* (often synonymized with *cheonmin* 賤民) called *nobi* (奴婢) was divided into two main categories – public (that is, attached to a particular office or organizational unit), and private (owned by another individual) ones. In practice, while their status was formally low, they were indistinguishable from commoners, and they could buy themselves out through grain donations to the state (the name of this practice being *napsok* 納贖) or by nominating a replacement (*Daejeon Hoetong, Hyeongjeon 刑典, Gongcheon 公賤*). As was with many other strata of Joseon society, the situation of both free peasants and *nobi* (or generally speaking, *nobi*-like individuals) was comparatively worse in the northern parts of the Peninsula, with the rebellion of Hong Gyongnae (洪景來) in 1811-1812 engaging substantial numbers of destitute individuals from that area. The disdain towards vagrancy and the preference towards a sedentary mode of existence in fact defined political establishments in both Europe and East Asia, at least partially due to economic reasons. Many of the *jungin* and *baekjeong* occupations were of key importance to the state and the *yangban*, as it was in the Commonwealth's *szlachta*'s intermingling with skilled members of bourgeoisie and lowborn artisans, peddlers, meat and skin processers and other providers of basic services.

The conceptual contrasts between economic standing and the birth-dependent status became ever more visible from the late Renaissance onto the Baroque era, even as the traditionalist top-down order of societal classes were highlighted, accepted or even enforced as part of the religious climate. Moreover, in the majority of Western Europe from the late sixteenth century onward, the position of the monarchy was strengthened, shaping it into the defining peak of social hierarchy (Maravall 1986: 27-29) that with the support of Catholic of Protestant Churches. , Concurrently to this, the perception of nobility grew rather fluid, characterized primarily by its land ownership or, in France, through the direct affiliation of

lineages to the royal court. As we can see, this was largely not the case in the Commonwealth as far as the relationship between the *szlachta* and successive kings was concerned. The legislation applying to the Commonwealth's bourgeoisie followed both the cultural trends of the time (namely, the interplay between the Counter-Reformation, the rapidly advancing arts and sciences, and the tensions between the *ancien regime* and *nouveau riche*) and the freedom- and authority-centric will of the *szlachta*. Specifically, the growth of the cities was promoted, but the rights and privileges of the citizens themselves, vis-à-vis the predominantly rural nobility, were until the eighteenth century curtailed with mixed results. As Wyczański writes in his book, while the situation of the city patricians (the highest echelons of bourgeoisie hierarchy, encompassing powerful merchants, bankers, or the richest artisans), on the one hand could act against the *szlachta* and purchase land, or become holders of the state's highest offices or Catholic Church's functionaries, on the other hand was precarious in its status, having to contend not only against the *szlachta*, but also with local guilds and the impoverished masses, who could at times violently voice their discontent (Wyczański 1965: 48-52) while, sporadically, some of the bourgeoisie's lower social strata found employment at *szlachta*'s major *folwark* or *latifundium* enterprises or, in the case of "new" cities (i.e. those established through the merging of multiple pre-existent villages), continued to cultivate their original farmland (ibid. 1965: 51). It should be noted that the merchant stratum, amidst the attempts to reinforce class and status divisions, acted as a lynchpin for all types of economic activities, by all social strata, at times providing credit even to the monarchs. In Joseon, the gradually rising demand for luxurious goods from China and Japan led to merchants - normally in the lower echelons of Confucian hierarchy – gaining significant effective societal standing, key role in the international trade, and a generally stable source of income, despite local markets being promoted from the sixteenth century onward and constituting threat to traditional merchant associations, such as those located in the old capital Kaesong (開城) (Park 2020: 143-

174). The general trend in Renaissance-Baroque Europe was that tenant farmers were too much of a useful resource by themselves to let them wander freely—consequently, the well-being of the land and its lords depended on the labor of such "tied-up" peasants (Lukowski 2003: 74-76). In Joseon, this dependency had varying dimensions, often in accordance with the political standing of the *yangban*, with regional considerations adding key background to the fragmentation of the scholar-nobility becoming explicit from the late sixteenth century onwards. Not only was the freedom of philosophical expression in Korea stifled by factionalism but the *yangban's* perceived or actual domination over the lower echelons of society did not follow class and status simultaneously. Nor was the situation of the commoner and lowborn people altogether painful or inescapable. For instance, decreasing of the tax burden by selling oneself into slavery oftentimes only brought minute problematic changes to the lifestyle of a commoner farmer, and only those unfree *nobi* who were attached as serfs to public state offices were distinguished in any way from standard "good men" (*yangmin* [良民]). The implementation of the "Uniform Tax Law" (*Daedongbeop* [大同法]) in the seventeenth century simplified tax burdens and procedures for non-elite tax-payers through systematizing rice as the primary medium; however, regardless of whether one was a member of the *yangmin* or the lowborn stratum, the practice of the upper social strata until the second half of the eighteenth century was to pressure destitute families to pay exorbitant military tax or have their men join the army (Kim 2014: 66). On the other hand, becoming part of the military, especially through passing an examination, often presented special developmental opportunities to lowborn individuals (Seo 2014: 208-210), though class- and status-advancement of non-elite individuals through military means from the late sixteenth century onward is not a very extensively researched topic, in either Korean or Polish-Lithuanian contexts. In the fifteenth-century Commonwealth a nominal change of status through economic prestige was understood as something plausible (Leszczyński 2020: 242-243), though

frowned upon—a rather far cry from the similar practices among slaves, commoners or middle tiers of society, which only started to become visible in the eighteenth century and were invariably ostracized or meticulously hidden by the "genuine" *yangban* establishment.

On the more personal and less institutional aspects of belief typically espoused by the *szlachta*, it suffices to say that the role of religion within the Sarmatic mindset suggested a moral dissonance, symptomatic of the wider trends of the European Baroque era; attachment of the Polish *szlachta* to (especially after the sixteenth century) Catholic faith usually took external forms of expression, rather than internal, pure faith. As Tazbir says in another one of his works (Tazbir 1979: 109-120), there were active attempts on the part of society and the establishment to equate political roles and positions (king, *hetman* army commanders, etc) with the saints and angels of Catholicism, both to make the faith more understandable to the illiterate social strata, and to provide "palatability" towards the bloody activities of the war-filled seventeenth century. Indeed, while we cannot say anything certain about the direct, historical relationship between the religion of the ancient Sarmatians and the metaphysical inclinations of the Commonwealth's nobility, a trend of using Catholicism and "cultured" Sarmatism to justify the freedom and violence associated with the *szlachta* as activities meant to protect the Christian world is discernible. It should be reiterated that while in economic, regional and political sense *szlachta* was horizontally as well as well as vertically divided, in terms of religion and custom, by late eighteenth century, the collective identity of this otherwise eclectic stratum shifted firmly towards Catholicism, with Eastern Orthodoxy and other religions or sects becoming sidelined. One of the major reasons for this tendency could lie in the number of foreign incursions, including the Swedish "Deluge" of 1655. The saber, horse and traditional *żupan* clothing—informal emblems of a *szlachcic*—thus pointed towards an image of a "civilized warrior" (contrasting with a notably austere clothing style preferred by the *yangban*), even if the mental horizons of a

typical noble in the seventeenth century Commonwealth were not very extensive. Benedykt Chmielowski (1700–1763), representing a typical noble of king Augustus III's reign (r. 1733–1763) —himself caught between the tail-end of the Central-Eastern European baroque and the forerunners of the Enlightenment—remains one of the chief portrayers of the era and of Sarmatic mentality. His monumental work, *Nowe Ateny* (*New Athens*) thus combines superstitions and national mythologies, with a strong interest in empirical sciences and finding the rational underpinnings of religious belief. On the topic of the Sarmatians' origins, he traces them to the second descendant (Magog) of Noah's son Japhet, squarely including the assumed ancestors of Poles among the "northern nations" (Chmielowski 1745); in Polish nobility's popular consciousness, *chłopi* peasants have since the medieval period been commonly perceived as descendants of Noah's cursed son Cham. Up until the mid-seventeenth century—when the entirety of the Commonwealth's populace became impoverished due to incessant wars—peasants, or at the very least families classified as such, could display significant affluency and learning, sometimes comparable to city-dwellers and lower-class *szlachta*. This could be considered an accomplishment in itself, given that at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the approximate levels of illiteracy among middle-class *szlachta* and bourgeoisie are estimated at 44%, and among the lowest echelons of the nobility could reach 92% (Wyczański 1965: 409); Wyczański additionally suggests, that literacy could be higher in northern and western regions of Poland, further solidifying geographic discrepancies between members of the *szlachta*. To compare, the literacy rate recorded among Koreans in 1930, twenty years after the fall of Joseon dynasty, was approximately 22% (Becker 2021: 9). The gradual decline in economic prosperity of the Commonwealth was thus correlated with increasing levels of strenuous *pańszczyzna* allotted to peasant households, contributing towards the later, somewhat mistaken belief in complete exploitation and subjugation of *chłopi* by *szlachta*. Peasants could marry and remarry freely (Lukowski 2010: 113-114),

except when one of the partners lived in a different village. Marriages between members of the nobility and bourgeoisie or even peasantry were a far more common and largely legal occurrence (Wyczański 1965: 148), in contrast with Joseon's *yangban* pursuit of genealogical and status purity.

The Grand Ming Code (大明律), a major point of reference in pre-modern and early-modern Korea's law, stipulates severe flogging as a punishment for arranged marriages between "slaves" (in Korea, this category could technically encompass not only servants per se, but also the majority of *cheonmin* lowborn service-providers) and members of the nobility, or conversely for registration of "honorable persons" as slaves (Jiang 2005: 87-88). At any rate, children of *yangban* men and non-elite concubines could not inherit their fathers' noble status. Furthermore, the state desired to maintain a stable tax base, and so a rising number of commoner-slave marriages presented a problem to it (*Jungjong Sillok 97:1a [1541/12/2]*), since the tributary duties of the *cheonmin* were comparatively low. Commoners and the lowborn people constituted the bulk of Joseon's soldiers, and in fact could raise their societal standing through participation in military examinations. Overall, the military lineages of the *yangban*, combined with the non-elite soldiers, contributed towards a stratum of a secondary status in Confucian ecumene. In the Commonwealth, the martial spirit of *szlachta* was, perhaps quite ironically, embodied not in the regular fighting force, culturally glorified by such formations as the *husaria* winged cavalry, but in the motley *pospolite ruszenie* (popular charge), formally raised by king himself, with often mixed results stemming from unclear or weak commandership by monarchs, from arrogance of *szlachta* as well as its lack of serious preparedness, and, perhaps most importantly, due to frequent idealization of this formation, interpreted through the lens of Sarmatic courage (Wierzbicki 2008: 43-48). This image stands juxtaposed against a *yangban* noble, who likewise considered himself a protector of his nation's philosophical orthodoxy from the Japanese or Manchu, but in a decidedly literary fashion (unless he was a member of a military

muban [武班] lineage), rather than through the arts of war. The factual identity and societal position of the *yangban* title were extensively examined by members of the seventeenth and eighteenth century "practical learning" trend, among them Yu Hyeongwon (柳馨遠; 1622–1673). In his collected works, he remarks that, in the past, any discrimination between nobles and commoners was on the basis of ethical conduct rather than familial origin, with the later times eventually witnessing increased status-based scrutiny combined with mutual disdain between the legitimate *yangban* and the illegitimate *seoja* (Yu Hyeongwon 1770). This opinion is just one of the many expressed by *silhak* (實學; literally "practical learning" or "real learning") scholars, who generally supported the Neo-Confucian orthodoxy but condemned multiple societal aberrations, among them the hereditary nature of *yangban* status; for them, *yangban* or *sadaebu* originally signified merely a passer of the civil service examination who came to be employed at state institutions, and not a noble by default. A relative of Yu Hyeongwon, Yi Ik (李瀷; 1681–1763), additionally advocated for societal divisions based on age (Yi Ik 1920), though it must be remembered that the *silhak* scholars were neither revolutionaries and rebels against the status quo, nor direct equivalents of European enlightenment's scientists, despite their wide-ranging interest in the natural world. Consequently, both the Commonwealth's *szlachta* and Joseon's *yangban* acknowledged their functional role, and a wide scope of independence vis-à-vis their individual monarchies, but detested any kind of institutional chaos, and unlike many other European and Asian states of their period, were strictly against the deposition of kings through violent means.

Overall, neither the Commonwealth's nor Joseon's political domains had aspects of absolute monarchy—however, in the former's case, the king was practically impotent as far as his powers vis-a-vis the *szlachta* were concerned. Thus, they were recognized as the topmost tier in the state's order and administration. However, internal divisions continued to foment. In Korea, the *Hungu* (勳舊派; Meritorious Subjects) paved the way for the more

ideologically and educationally-inclined *Sarim* (士林), partially through the multiple "purges" and factional upheavals roughly in the time frame of 1498–1546 (Lee 1993: 475-476); the latter group subsequently, from the seventeenth century onward, experienced further factional divisions based on their philosophical and political attitudes. In the Commonwealth, the regional *szlachta*, from the early sixteenth century onward, weakened in favor of the state-wide *magnateria* (Litwin 1983: 467-468). As stated above, it would be highly disputable to assume that the pre-modern Korea represented a decentralized feudal state. Nevertheless, clear spheres of influence by the *yangban* became visible from the sixteenth century onward. The local registers (*yuhyangso* [留鄕所]) —established primarily for the purpose of delineating *yangban* men living within local societies, and for the purpose of ethical management of these societies—were one of the forms these spheres of influence took, and were eventually merged with the system of local elite shrine-academies (*seowon*[書院]), which were, in turn, eventually perceived as a distinct political threat by the central government in the nineteenth century. Baek Seung-A, however, indicates that the actual antagonism on the part of the local *yangban* was typically directed at the social strata that posed an actual danger to noble interests in specific areas or fields of expertise—such as the unsalaried, "wicked" *hyangni* (鄕吏) clerks (Baek 2021: 48-49). This was compounded by the fact that following the death of the last Jagiellonian king, Sigismundus Augustus in 1572, the process of electing each subsequent king took the form of a mass nobility congregation. The key formational path to a group identity which was to shape the next two centuries of Polish "public" (if in practice highly limited) society stood wide open, with philosophy, rituals and politics determining the fates of *szlachta* to nearly the same degree that economy and land possessions did—similarly to the Korean *yangban* after Japanese and Manchu invasions.

4. Precarity of the Noble Status and the Brink of Change

Turning our focus to the material means of status reinforcement, s in Joseon, officially, all land belonged to the monarchy. Even in the event of it being provided for the needs of a recognized nobleman and his family (and in exchange for special service—though that was more common early in the dynasty), it was still assumed to belong to the crown. Here we coincidentally arrive at the main points of division between the *szlachta* and the *yangban* as far as their status was concerned. Firstly, land could be held by a *yangban* and his genealogical descendants only if they were of so-called "primary" standing; that is, if they were born of a legitimate male *yangban* and his non-commoner or non-lowborn wife. Confusion between what was considered legitimate and illegitimate, both in societal and ritual terms, indeed constituted much of discourse among the literati in sixteenth to eighteenth century Joseon. The aforementioned giant of *silhak* thought, Yi Ik, stipulates on this point that

"The [crimes in] Community Compact regulations are as follows: … ones who evict their legal wives, one who does not distinguish female and male status, one who confuses status of his wife and concubine, one who treats his secondary descendant as a legitimate one, one who being a legitimate son does not care for his secondary sibling properly, one who being a secondary son disrespects his legitimate brother (Yi Ik 1920; my own translation)" .

To formally keep their privileges, descendants of a *yangban* lineage would still have to consistently, generation-by-generation pass at least the initial stages of the *Gwageo* (科擧) — the all-encompassing examination system for civilian, military and technical expertise, with the *Mungwa* (文科; civil), and more uncommonly *Mugwa* (武科; military) examinations carrying enough prestige as to reinforce the social standing of a hereditary scholar-official, and, rarely, the participating individuals of lowborn (even "slave") or secondary status (Park 2001: 23). While, in theory,

all members of the "good" *yangmin* stratum could sit for any and all exams, the actual customary practice, and the inter-related economic reality, prevented most from active participation, and the initially nominal possibility of attendance granted to farmers virtually dissipated by the seventeenth century (Ch'oe 1974: 624); the "dark" practitioners of shamanism, who were interpreted by Confucians as conflicting with their own "virtuous" communication with spirits (Han 2020: 74), were prohibited explicitly. In contrast, there were no certificates signifying noble status with the respectively associated educational or institutional achievement of the *szlachta*, who, as described above, oftentimes educated their children informally in their homes—more advanced, secular educational institutions that would garner the support of the nobility coming only with the Counter-Reformation movement, and later in the wake of the European Enlightenment. At any rate, both the *szlachta* and the *yangban* generally abhorred hard physical work and mercantile activities, and so land-tilling became the domain of dependent serfs. The perceived threat to the prestige, wealth, and power within the state, held by the Commonwealth's and Joseon's noble strata, came not from the impoverished, angry and constrained lowborn or peasant people (with the exception of Bohdan Chmielnicki's uprising in 1648), but from elsewhere. Specifically, the middle strata, in both cases represented primarily by technical specialists, merchants, city-dwellers and "secondary" offshoots of noble lineages that could not be directly classified as either *szlachta* or *yangban*. Among the pre-Joseon "strongmen" mentioned earlier in this article figured the *hyangni*, to whom the *silhak* trend ascribed the majority—though by no means all—of the negative societal traits that in the eyes of these "empirical" scholar-literati besmirched their times. The newly-established Confucian government of Korea feared their encroachment and the potential diluting of clear social delineations, and so by the reign of the third king, Taejong 太宗 (r. 1400–1418), the dissolution of the majority of former privileges of the *hyangni* was complete, transforming them into a non-salaried stratum of local functionaries in provincial areas, whose duties were

to be aiding the centrally-delegated magistrates in their administrative work, consequently disassociating them from their former ancestral lands and power bases (Duncan 2014: 218-220). On the other hand, it may be argued that the focus on this occupational stratum by Joseon's early kings was not singular, and that the *hyangni* essentially constituted an "irregular" social domain, not unlike the *baekjeong* and the other "quasi-commoner" groups, that had to be reorganized following the establishment of the new, Neo-Confucian socio-political order (Choi 2009: 240-241). In this way, the attire of the *hyangni* marked them as members of the lowborn; coarse cloth and wide-brimmed hats marked their presence to all. At the same time, their role in local government was indispensable, much like the case of the *jungin* specialists who mainly lived in larger towns and cities. They carved out their occupational niches, remaining skilled in fields the *yangban* would shun, oftentimes also developing their own distinct genealogical identity—something that was otherwise rare beyond the scholar-literati in the Joseon era. Among occupations hereditarily taken up by the *jungin* were translators, legal technicians and aides to the *yangban*, accountants, skilled physicians and astronomers (Hwang 2004: 108). The astronomers and translators, or interpreters, served the most important functions as far as the maintenance of the Confucian order was concerned; the former prepared and corrected calendars, dealt with time-keeping and geomancy, while the latter were the main points of contacts with various "barbarians" in the northern border regions as well as during diplomatic missions to China and Japan (ibid.: 108-110). Due to the lack of career opportunities in the civil branch of the government, compared to legitimate *yangban* descendants, the "secondary sons"—who were also deprived of equal inheritance through the acts of the early Joseon kings—frequently gained competences and economic stability through their association with this eclectic middle stratum, and by passing the technical—or "miscellaneous"— *Japgwa* (雜科) examinations. Moreover, as Hwang observes, the most dominant lineages among the *jungin* specialized in multiple disciplines and

some among them gained wealth comparable to the richest merchants—leading to them act as lenders to the highest echelons of society (ibid.: 112, 118), similar to the Commonwealth's merchants. Analogically, the Commonwealth's nobility had only one real rival class in terms of literacy, level of culture, economic power and political influence: the aforementioned city-dwellers in Poland and Lithuania, whose influence eventually became paramount in shaping the Partitions' economies after the downfall of independence in 1795 and the subsequent reshaping of the *szlachta*'s social standing and national identity.

As one may surmise at this point, the philosophical aspect of the *szlachta* identity, as opposed to the *yangban*'s, is essentially a composite construct of multiple contrasting elements. Aside from the aforementioned notion of Sarmatism—which, once again, by the sixteenth and seventeenth century had only rudimentary vestiges of historicity—only the concept of "golden freedom" (*libertas aurea*; a term for collective privileges and powers of the *szlachta*) acted as an overarching system of socio-political belief, casting its shadow upon the majority of religious phenomena in the Commonwealth. As stated above, the preference of nobles towards Roman Catholicism became especially strong during the Baroque. Denigration of Buddhism was coupled with the unfortunate time frame of the introduction of the "idealist" Lu-Wang school of Neo-Confucianism into Korea, along with highly critical commentaries by its Ming scholars. Consequently, the "realist" Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy dominated the socio-political landscape of the upper echelons of society, and one would be hard-pressed to pinpoint any *yangban* clans openly espousing philosophical outlooks different from the officially-accepted ideology; only rather eccentric, reclusive scholars expressed any degree of interest in the intuitive, Taoism-, or Buddhism-like (in the eyes of the Cheng-Zhu conservatives) teachings of Wang Yangming (王陽明; 1472–1529) and Lu Xiangshan (陸象山; 1139–1192) (Deuchler 2015: 180-181). Notably, due to the Japanese and Manchu invasions and the downfall of the Ming dynasty, Korea's Confucian elites developed

a shared perception of being the singular bastion of culture in the world, maintaining the high standards associated with the "legitimate" dynasties of China, while being surrounded by "barbarian" countries. The ritual forms of expression of these attitudes were severely regulated by law and Chinese canon, and by themselves signified a noble upbringing. Thus, especially from the second half of the eighteenth century, they came to be imitated even by commoners and lowborn people. One may argue that, just as with the often highly emotional displays of piety by *szlachta* during momentous political and military events (e.g. the Swedish "Deluge" invasion of 1655), the Neo-Confucian ritualism of Joseon served to maintain cohesiveness, and a sense of belonging to a common cultural ecumene, among the *yangban* scholar-nobility. At the same time, certain cracks in this cohesiveness were becoming obvious, if not necessarily formalized. Even though both the Commonwealth and Joseon had only the rudimentary characteristics of feudal states, lines of division between their noble identities and certain interests could be traced, particularly those of a geographic, economic, and political nature. Regional discrimination, with the exception of the one directed at the *yangban* from the northern provinces, was seldom based on legal principles; popular custom and intra-regional competition for the (notoriously limited in number) official positions in central government were the prime motivators. Some of these rivalries translated to political toxicity stretching into the modern era—for example, the enmity between Gyeongsang (慶尙) and Jeolla (全羅) provinces (Haberman 1987). From the late eighteenth century onward, as the fragmentation of the stratum progressed and accessibility of well-paid positions dwindled, the quality of farming land became a key factor in defining social standing and economic prosperity of the *yangban*, their associates and offshoots (such the *seoja* [庶子] illegitimate offspring). This was partially reflected by the decreased prominence of the mountainous Gangwon (江原) and northern provinces, as the quality of soil there was inferior to that in the south (Choe 2019: 52-53). In a similar vein, parts of the infertile Mazowsze (Masovia) region of

the Commonwealth came to be associated with impoverished *szlachta* (Uniwersytet w Białymstoku 2021), while the rich Wielkopolska region abounded with fertile fields, with many *magnateria* clans having their roots or landholdings there. The *szlachta* from Greater Poland, Lesser Poland, Masovia, Lithuania, Ruthenia and the "Wild Fields" often treated each other with disdain. An equivalent to this situation in the Joseon era was the rivalry between the *yangban* of Gyeonggi, Chungcheong, Jeolla and Gyeongsang provinces, each of which had the claim to fame of having produced a particularly large number of civil service examination graduates. And, the "Wild Fields"—encompassing mostly the traditional territory of Ukraine and parts of Belarus—had a counterpart in the northern provinces of Pyeongan (平安), Hamgyeong (咸鏡) and Hwanghae (黃海), in that the popular perception by other regions and stratifying regulations of the central establishment—meant to preserve the status and cohesiveness of the "legitimate" *yangban* lineages—led to the shunning of their nobles and their wider populace alike as people of a second category (Kim 2008: 135-136). Consequently there is an important distinction to note between the social composition of Joseon's and the Commonwealth's fringe regions, in that in the northern regions of the Korean Peninsula a distinct status group akin to the Ukrainian Cossacks apparently did not form. Adding to the complexity and diversity of interests among the Commonwealth's *szlachta*, there was also a degree of "national" tension between the noble clans of Poland and Lithuania, primarily driven by the former's historically longer ancestry, though it must also be noted that the regions historically associated with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (most importantly, Belarus and parts of Ukraine) were on their own highly varied in terms of their *szlachta*'s ethnic and socio-economic standing. "*Szlachta szaraczkowa*" ("grey nobility") or "*gołota*" ("naked *szlachta*") were just two of the multitude of *szlachta*'s impoverished sub-groups, and one's noble standing in the face of the law could additionally be decreased or practically abolished, contingent on acts bringing infamy upon oneself – this could apply

even to magnates from significant lineages (Pasek 2011). Likewise in Joseon, exile or execution remained a distinct possibility for any *yangban* in public office Głowacki remarks, that despite the gradually increasing Catholic profile of the Commonwealth, the popular disdain of *szlachta* towards Protestants had a nationalistic (typically anti-German or anti-French) component, and should not be characterized as an active religious intolerance (Głowacki 2014: 29-48) despite—or perhaps due to—the tendency of the law to limit or bar land ownership by non-Catholics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Disdain and hostility were much more readily expressed towards Muslims, given the long history of conflicts between the Commonwealth and the Ottoman Empire. Regardless, as implied by Głowacki's paper, the long-term habitation of the Commonwealth's territories by non-Catholic or non-Christian nominal "Poles" or "Lithuanians" appeared to make these peoples more palatable to *szlachta* and the law, though conflicts with the often orthodox Ukrainian Cossacks occasionally flared (Davies 2005: 336-338), exacerbated by Cossacks' sympathies towards Russia. Contrasted by this interplay of politics and religion, up until the early 1700s, the philosophical disputes on the Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy and the degree of adherence to its heritage by specific individuals (like Pak Sedang [朴世堂]or Yun Hyu [尹鑴]) also formed a backbone of factional conflicts at the royal court, and a *yangban*'s social standing and legal fate was contingent on his carefulness during debates and exchange of letters (Deuchler 1999: 128-130), with execution, exile or infamy (through such titles as "Despoiler of the Way"; kor. *Samun nanjeok* [斯文亂賊]) as possible outcomes; thus, the ideological profile of Joseon may be said to strongly imply, or even be directly connected with, intolerance. This intolerance and the perceived imperative to maintain ritual propriety at all levels of public discourse, reaching its peak in the second half of the seventeenth century, was likely spurred on not only by internal political circumstances (such king Gwanghae's diplomatic balancing of diplomatic relations between the Han Chinese and the Manchu, which caused his deposition by

Joseon's orthodox establishment in 1623), but also due to the still-fresh memory of the Ming dynasty's downfall (1644) and king Injo's (仁祖; reign 1623-1649) kowtow (1636) before the leader of the invading Qing forces. As the relations with the Qing eventually stabilized, the country has simultaneously maintained its "hermit" status and remained open to innovations of purely practical, and mostly agricultural value. At any rate, the dangers to the noble strata of both the Commonwealth and Joseon were of both internal and external nature. To reiterate, the main threats to the stability of noble strata in Poland-Lithuania and Korea were simultaneously internal and external. The former ones included weakness and chaos of national institutions (both central and local) in which the particularist interests of nobles played a key their role, and the latter being the regional encroachment of rapidly developing foreign powers (with Russia, Prussia and Japan being the main actors). Other significant and long-term threats to nobilities of the Commonwealth and Joseon included the shift in the intellectual base and technical competences (in the face of increased international interference combined with the progress associated with European Enlightenment and missionary activities in Asia) from the landed gentry to the bourgeoisie, and in Korea, from the *yangban* to the *jungin*, "secondary sons" and *cheonmin* sub-strata. Nevertheless, Despite these dynamics and the downward trajectory of national cultures dominated by the noble status groups, the relative homogeneity of Korean society has been largely maintained until the present day, while the remarkable ethnic and cultural divergences (that is, taking the role of Tatars, Jews and others into account, and aside of the factor of the *szlachta*'s own fragmentation) in Polish and Lithuanian societies were additionally exacerbated by the Russian, Prussian and Austrian tripartition of the Commonwealth, and only the Second World War brought an end to this diversity. In the meantime, the Polish-Lithuanian *szlachta* collapsed culturally and economically just like their Korean counterparts did, leaving behind a complex heritage – both positive and negative within the scope of national histories – the impact of which is still being assessed today.

5. Conclusions

Despite the seemingly vast geographic and cultural differences, multiple instances of socio-political and ideological convergence may be traced in comparative research of the nobility in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and in Joseon Korea. To start, despite the different perspectives on the role of education in defining pathways of personal careers and the long-term stability of livelihood, a sense of philosophical or historical uniqueness pervaded the mindsets of the *szlachta* and the *yangban*, acting as a separating line between them and the other status groups in their respective states. Indeed, it was extraordinarily difficult to become a true noble other than being born as one. Political connections cultivated through multiple generations, or the resources and know-how for passing *Gwageo* examinations at their highest level (before the king himself) could not be easily attained by non-elites. Furthermore, while a particularly affluent individual of any stratum could potentially acquire an area of land equaling the territories owned by "magnates" or the ultra-powerful *polyol* lineages, a sense of ancestral belonging or the various mythologies associated with a place of origin typically could not be convincingly construed or substituted, though, as noted above, specific legal injunctions against the bourgeoisie existed in the Commonwealth, and in Joseon, to an extent, the commoners were also protected by law against excesses of the elites. Nevertheless, a key dimension to noble identity in the Commonwealth and Korea—one that is not always given attention by historians—is the pragmatic and essentially fluid border between the inborn status, ideologies underpinning it, and the socio-economic or military reality necessitating preservation of one's livelihood through acts normally unsavory to the *szlachta* and the *yangban*. Borders and borderlands, and not exclusively the ones between the noble Christianity and Sarmatic freedom in the Commonwealth, or between adherence to the reality of the regional geopolitics and maintaining doctrinal orthodoxy in Joseon,

characterized both internal and external images of the two discussed states. The encroachment upon family farmland by enterprising individuals—not necessarily of noble upbringing—the inability to carve a niche into educational and political environments due to their limited size and levels of saturation, and the resulting inability to maintain stable income, weighed heavily upon members of the *szlachta* and *yangban* alike. The new social, philosophical and technological trends from the "barbarian" Manchu Qing and the rapidly "enlightening" Western Europe were applied only selectively by the end of the eighteenth century due to the various real and theoretical tensions described above, leading to the *szlachta* and the *yangban*'s gradual intellectual isolation vis-à-vis the other social strata and the neighboring countries. In the Commonwealth's case, successive uprisings, and conflicts with foreign states in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries badly affected not just the state coffers and infrastructure, but also devastated arable lands, driving multiple nobles into the landless stratum of *golota* (non-possessive *szlachta* earning their living through various services to the crown or magnates). In Korea, despite a relatively peaceful period after the foreign invasions, the reconstruction period and the finalization of ritual controversies under king Sukjong's (肅宗) reign (r. 1674–1720) in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the society experienced high levels of fragmentation, and cases of extreme poverty and dramatic opulence were common both among the elites and non-elites. Consequently, only the absolutely topmost, truly royal echelons of society could enjoy a semblance of stability—highly important after the death of king Jeongjo, followed by that of Hong Gyongnae and the Donghak (東學) religious and socio-political disturbances (around 1850 and 1894), along with frequent famine and low crop yields. As part of these processes, the popular image of nobility – itself, as we have seen, based both in the Commonwealth and Korea on tensions between the ideal "lofty" and denigrated "beastly" - gradually fluctuated between the quasi-sacred "Other", through the merely privileged "Otherness", to the decaying "Other". In this sense, a basic conclusion comes to mind:

no matter what kind of exalted identity one may profess, it is invariably contingent on contentious narratives, material necessities and the often "lowly" and "dirty" prose of reality, rather than the poetry – even through though the poetry of foundational myths can bring meaning and identity to the people struggling to survive in the "borderlands".

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL CONTACT IN CASABLANCA: EXPLORING SOUTH KOREA'S INFLUENCE ON MOROCCAN SOCIETY

FATIMA MELLOUK, PhD
Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences
University of Mohammed First, Oujda, Morocco
Phone: +8613061290973/ +212604881740
Email: fatimamellouk17@gmail.com

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0009-0324-7598

Abstract: Morocco has been home to many foreign cultures for decades. Language contact involves the mutual influence of languages between interacting individuals. East Asian people, among the many foreigners in Morocco, have contributed to various practices that attract young people. South Korean culture, in particular, is becoming increasingly popular due to the global reach of its entertainment sector. Consequently, a significant number of young Moroccans are influenced by Korean pop culture, which is

evident in their behaviors. They watch Korean TV shows, listen to Korean music, dress in Korean fashion, and adopt Korean expressions and gestures. These influences contribute to a new, blended culture that isn't entirely Moroccan or Korean. Despite limited academic research on this topic, understanding these cultural exchanges is crucial. This article will focus on Casablanca, with research conducted through questionnaires and interviews distributed online and in person, targeting individuals exposed to Korean culture.

Keywords: Language Contact, Culture, Korean, East Asian, Foreign, Young Moroccans, Casablanca

카사블랑카에서의 언어와 문화의 접촉 : 모로코 사회에 끼친 한국의 영향력 탐구

초록 : 모로코는 수십 년 동안 많은 이질적인 문화의 본거지였다. 언어 접촉은 상호작용하는 개인들 사이에서 발생하는 언어의 상호 영향을 의미한다. 모로코에 거주하는 많은 외국인들 가운데 동아시아인들은 젊은이들을 사로잡는 다양한 문화를 선보여왔다. 특히 한국 문화는 엔터테인먼트 분야의 글로벌 진출로 인해 점점 더 많은 인기를 얻고 있다. 그 결과 상당수의 모로코 젊은이들이 한국 대중문화의 영향을 받고 있으며 이는 그들의 행동에서 분명히 드러나고 있다. 모로코의 젊은이들은 한국의 TV 쇼들을 보고, 한국의 음악을 듣고, 한국 패션을 입고 그리고 한국식 표현과 제스쳐를 따라한다. 이러한 영향들은 온전히 모로코적인 것도, 한국적인 것도 아닌 새로운 혼합된 문화를 형성한다. 본고의 주제 관련해 선행 학술연구는 아직 부족한 바, 이러한 문화 교류를 이해하는 것은 중요하다. 본고는 카사블랑카를 중심으로, 한국 문화에 노출된 젊은 이들을 대상으로 온라인과 오프라인에서 배포된 설문지와 인터뷰를 통해 연구를 진행했다.

키워드: 언어 접촉, 문화, 한국인, 동아시아인, 외국어, 젊은 모로코 인, 모로코, 카사블랑카

1. Introduction

Morocco has a longstanding history as a melting pot of diverse ethnicities and cultures, where people from various races and backgrounds coexist harmoniously within the country's welcoming borders. With a wide variety of Indigenous cultures, including the prominent Berber heritage, Moroccans have a tradition of adaptability and amiability when it comes to living alongside foreigners. Moroccans are famous for their hospitality, a quality enhanced by the flourishing tourism industry that consistently brings together people from all over the world. Thus, Morocco's history of embracing diversity and harmonious coexistence with individuals from different backgrounds is a defining characteristic of the nation. This adaptability, built upon a foundation of multiculturalism and historical interactions, remains a defining feature of Moroccan society.

In recent years, Morocco has actively embraced elements of Eastern Asian cultures, with a particular focus on the influential countries of China, Japan, and South Korea. This infusion of East Asian cultural influences is a testament to Morocco's evolving cultural landscape and its openness to global interactions. Notably, the rich tapestry of traditions and practices from these countries has enriched aspects like cuisine, fashion, art, and even entertainment. Moroccans now enjoy various dining experiences, ranging from Chinese dishes to Japanese sushi, while also exploring K-pop music and other Asian art forms. This cross-cultural exchange reflects Morocco's ever-expanding cultural horizons and its ability to integrate diverse elements from both East and West into its societal fabric.

Korean culture is widely popular and has a good reputation. It is increasingly gaining international recognition and its influence is growing stronger, thanks to its intriguing cultural elements. Many people may associate Korea with its advanced technological innovations and its competitive position among the top global leaders, which is a source of pride and fame for South Korea. However, this

recognition tends to be more prevalent among older generations, often overshadowing what captures the interest of younger generations.

South Korean pop culture, often referred to as "Hallyu" or the Korean Wave, has made a significant impact on younger generations worldwide and is now a prominent player in the world of pop culture. The entertainment industry in South Korea has achieved considerable success on the global stage. Therefore, it begs the question; why not explore this phenomenon more in academia? Why not consider it a remarkable facet of contemporary culture that South Korea has shared with the rest of the world, including Morocco? This cross-cultural exchange deserves more attention and examination within the academic realm as it sheds light on the evolving landscape of global cultural influence.

This article serves as a gateway to highlighting the significance of this phenomenon and provides valuable insights into a topic that remains relatively less known to many. Furthermore, the theoretical framework laid out finds validation in a case study conducted primarily online in the city of Casablanca, chosen due to its substantial population.

The study had three key research questions. It looked at how much foreign culture, especially South Korean pop culture, affects people's lives in Morocco. It also explored how these foreign influences blend with local cultures to create something new. Lastly, the study examined how these influences affect young Moroccans' choices in entertainment, fashion, what they buy, and what this means for their lives and their consumption in general.

2. Literature review

This paper will introduce how Korean culture affects and influences Moroccan society in different ways, which is all based on the theories of globalization, cultural exchange, media and internet influences. It

will explore how the media content that Moroccans are exposed to shapes their perception along with their engagement to the culture itself, its history, and its other cultural elements.

Judging by the geographical location of Morocco, one would predict that it is a meeting point of different cultures altogether, European, Asian, American, and African. Historically, these cultural influences have shaped Morocco which exists today, along with globalization. However, when someone thinks about globalization, the first thing that comes to mind is the main influence of the United States over the rest of the world, but beyond this, there was a significant wave that also spread everywhere and became very popular and attractive, people embraced it, and it soon became widely known. How would such a far and small country as South Korea make its way to a North African country that was not known to have any significant shared history with the former? Two very different cultures came into contact and created a mixture of a newborn culture that the young generations seem to love and admire.

South Korea is a country full of fun traditions and colorful festivities and its entertainment sector is bigger than ever. If you were to ask anyone in the world about one of the music bands, or of some famous figures, or even the country's technological products you would get a positive answer. Of course, at the beginning, it did not reach the whole world but this is what it went through.

> K-pop is different. First, it has enjoyed a continued run of success for the past 15 years - a longer span of time than the golden years of the Hong Kong movie industry (from the late 1980s to late 1990s) or the Japanese J-pop wave (during the 1990s). Second, it has drawn in huge audiences in Japan and across Southeast Asia since the early 2000s, paving the way into the rest of Asia and other parts of the world since the late 2000s. Last, but not least, a significant number of K-pop groups have achieved regular chart hits around the world, prompting Billboard to launch a global chart entitled "K-pop Hot 100". Furthermore, YouTube created a specific K-pop entry to its existing musical entries. All combined, these trends give the impression that the popularity and success of K-pop are developing into a true global force. (Messerlin & Shin, 2017)

Looking at how K-pop started to become popular in neighboring countries before it spread to all the other continents, surely shows how strong and influential it is. *Billboard*, an American magazine known for featuring global artists and music albums, was predominantly filled with artists from the US or other English-speaking countries. However, the immense global popularity of K-pop eventually led *Billboard* to start featuring K-pop bands and singers. This shift highlights how K-pop's influence transcended language barriers and achieved remarkable success. Despite being sung in Korean, a language that many listeners do not speak, the universal appeal of music made this success story even more significant. Now, many people are learning Korean and diving into the culture through their love of K-pop.

3. Morocco's Historical-Cultural Influences

The original inhabitants of Morocco were the Berber people, also known as the Amazigh. This indigenous Amazigh population laid the foundations of Moroccan culture, contributing to its richness and complexity. The customs and traditions of the Amazigh are what give Morocco its unique and vibrant cultural identity. According to Stirling (1870-1871), "The races of Morocco may be arranged under the following names: Berbers, AI Ryf (the Ryf-men), Arabs, Bohara troops, and other negroes, or half-breeds, and the Jews." This historical diversity reflects how Morocco has been shaped by various races and cultures over time.

Another major influence on Morocco began in the 7th century with the Arab conquest, which introduced Islam to the region. Along with the religion, the Arabs brought their language, traditions, and customs. Over time, the Moroccan people integrated these elements with their own, creating a unique cultural synthesis that continues to

define Morocco today. This blend is evident in various aspects of Moroccan life, including architecture, cuisine, religion, and language.

The Arab conquest of Morocco in the late 7th century encountered significant resistance from the Berber tribes. Despite this opposition, the Arabs ultimately succeeded in establishing their control, leading to the widespread adoption of Arab culture and the Muslim religion among the Berbers (Morocco.com, 2021). Moroccan Arabic, though influenced by various foreign languages, remains primarily rooted in Arabic.

Another significant influence on Moroccan culture comes from its European and Mediterranean neighbors. The geographical proximity and shared history have facilitated a rich exchange of cultures, ideas, and arts. These interactions have left a lasting impact on Moroccan culture, contributing to its diverse and multifaceted nature.

Another notable influence on Moroccan culture comes from Africa. Morocco has historically played a major role in trade, with routes connecting it to the rest of Africa. This facilitated the exchange of cultural practices and introduced elements of African culture into Morocco's already rich cultural fabric. Today, many Sub-Saharan students and immigrants live in Morocco, though their influence on Moroccan culture might seem modest.

However, the rising global popularity of Afro-music has led some Moroccan artists to incorporate this genre into their work and engage with it extensively. While this influence may not be historical, it represents a contemporary shift in Moroccan culture, highlighting the ongoing exchange of cultural influences. Morocco was also home to Jewish communities in the past, but their influence on Moroccan culture is minimal.

The colonial era in Morocco brought significant changes, particularly in urban planning, language, and administration. French culture had a profound impact on Moroccan society. As noted, "The French culture has left a strong impact on the culture of the Moroccans. One aspect of the French culture that shows the effect of imperialism is the French language." Additionally, the education system was

notably affected by French and Spanish influences. "The school system was another part of Morocco that was influenced by the French and Spanish. During the colonization of Morocco, new schools were established that differed from the traditional Moroccan schools" (Colonization of Morocco, n.d.).

Globalization has also played a significant role in transforming Moroccan culture. It has facilitated numerous cultural exchanges, boosted international trade, and encouraged a cultural fusion that has been embraced globally. Moroccan society is celebrated for its dynamism and diversity. Interactions with various foreign cultures have been seen as a celebration of Moroccan traditions and languages, creating a crossroads where differences are celebrated and cultures blend together.

Until now, South Korea has not had significant encounters with Moroccan culture, at least not in the context we've explored in this article. This absence of interaction sets the stage for an intriguing discussion on the potential for cultural exchange between these two regions. In the following section, we will delve into how emerging global trends might influence future connections between South Korean and Moroccan cultures and explore the possibilities for new cultural intersections.

4. The Emergence of Korean Culture in Morocco

The initial connection between South Korea and Morocco was diplomatic, dating back to 1962 when South Korea established its first embassy on the African continent in Rabat, Morocco. This connection created an opening for a more in-depth cultural exchange, which aligns with cultural diplomacy theory. The theory suggests that when two countries are involved diplomatically, their cultural exchange is bound to expand and they often end up having influences on each other. According to Sorge et al. (2022),

> The Korean embassy in Rabat is Seoul's first permanent diplomatic representation on the African continent. In addition, its economic model, based on the nexus of "planning in the industrial and financial fields/ priority to education and work" is considered with attention by Morocco, both by the official authorities and by the public opinion, with which it shares more characteristics than one might think: a long-standing identity, a role of impetus of the State in economic matters, a strong position on economic sectors. Seoul, which pursues a foreign policy that synthesizes economic internationalism and geopolitical isolationism, geopolitically sees Morocco as a privileged entry point for its investments in Africa.

Back then, Korean pop culture was not even close to its peak and had probably gone unnoticed or was nonexistent in foreign countries. However, when it reached its top, it was everywhere, and because of globalization, it made its way to Morocco as well. This is around the same time it reached many countries in Europe, Asia, America, and Africa. In the early 2000s, more people became aware of it through Korean dramas broadcast on local TV channels and dubbed into Arabic or songs played on music TV channels accessible via satellite. As time went on, the influence grew as people watched more Korean content and were exposed to it more frequently. With the advent of personal computers and affordable internet connections, facilitated by technologies like WiFi routers, there was a significant shift in how people accessed and utilized the internet from their homes, becoming more open to Korean culture in all its forms.

This reflects globalization theory, which is based on how the media acts as a connecting bridge for cross-cultural exchanges and interactions. Korean culture spread through dramas, music, and TV shows broadcast on TV and online and began to look more attractive for business. A few Korean restaurants started to open, and people began importing Korean snacks and buying Korean merchandise online. Events were held to celebrate Korean culture, communities were formed, and the community of Korean culture enthusiasts has continued to grow.

Nowadays, there are events and concerts in Morocco, talent shows, Korean singing groups, and festivals related to Korean culture. The Korean embassy in Morocco is active in fostering cultural events such as K-pop concerts, film screenings, and Korean cultural workshops. For instance, the 2019 Korean Film Festival in Morocco demonstrated this effort, showcasing Korean cinema and increasing cultural ties between Morocco and South Korea. "Three Korean films --"A Little Forest," "Assassination" and "Train to Busan" – were screened in the city of Khouribga. Other Moroccan cities like Settat, Agadir, Marrakech, Rabat, and Tangier also featured activities as part of the festival. "(Korea.net, 2019). This initiative has not only encouraged people to participate and explore the beautiful Korean culture but also enhanced their appreciation for the richness of the Korean culture in the eyes of Moroccans.

In addition to traditional media, the rise of the internet has also contributed to the spread of Korean culture in Morocco. Popular online platforms allowed the fast spread of this foreign culture. The theory of digital globalization highlights how Korean content became widely accessible almost everywhere. Most of this widespread phenomenon can be attributed to YouTube. Many young people and teenagers are heavily engaged with the internet, particularly YouTube. One notable example of this is the rise of BTS fandom in Morocco, which began on YouTube.

The internet also allowed young Moroccans to create their own groups to share their passion for Korean culture without any direct involvement from Koreans. For instance, the Moroccan fan club BTS Morocco was established by a 23-year-old named Maha. Her journey into Korean music began five years ago while she was casually browsing YouTube. She came across a video by the American YouTube celebrities the Fine Brothers, which featured kids reacting to K-pop. This video sparked her interest, and despite her previous preference for hard rock and thrash metal, she was captivated by the energetic style and sound of the Korean band Super Junior. (Haddad-Fonda, 2021)

Many fans of Korean dramas and music have similar stories, with YouTube being a key platform for discovering and falling in love with Korean pop culture. Its diverse content and captivating appeal make it a prominent starting point for enthusiasts worldwide. Young Moroccans often created online communities to share their love for K-pop and their perspectives on the media content they consume, particularly through the internet. This reflects cultural hybridity, in which it shows how young Moroccans blend both Korean and Moroccan cultural elements.

5. The Direct Cultural Exploration of Korea in Morocco and Identity Formation

The cultural exchange between Korea and Morocco opens up various opportunities for exploration, not only has it affected the local identities of numerous Moroccans, but it has also made its way to their ways of communication. K-pop has led its Moroccan fans to learn the language and communicate through it with each other, fostering an inclusive linguistic exchange. A situation that was witnessed by someone on a train was that a group of Moroccan girls were conversing in Korean with each other, "After speaking to them, I realized that the girls (who are native Arabic speakers) loved K-pop so much that they learned the language and decided to only speak to each other in it" (Mille World, 2019). Now this shows how highly influential is Korean culture through its Music and K-pop.

Direct cultural exploration comes from a rising interest in a certain culture. Looking at the case of Korean culture in Morocco, a significant number of Moroccan youth, especially students, end up applying for Korean government scholarships or exchange programs, mainly because of their interest in exploring this culture that they were exposed to through media and the internet. Their admiration for some aspects of this culture drives their path there.

In celebration of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Morocco and South Korea, the South Korean ambassador said, "I hope what you will experience in Korea will build not only a bridge between Korea and Morocco but bridges among nations and cultures promoting diversity and multilateralism in this ever-divided world" (Latrech, 2022). This quote shows that the Korean embassy is aiming to promote its cultural aspects through scholarships and visits to the peninsula. The context in which this speech was made was after some Moroccan students were selected to go study in Korea on a scholarship through the GKS program.

The engagement with Korean culture goes beyond simple admiration. The influence it has on the identity of Moroccan youth encourages them to blend different aspects into their everyday lives. An important part of their navigation of this culture and incorporating elements of Korean pop culture while maintaining their Moroccan heritage manifests itself in different ways such as participation in different K-pop events, imitating and performing covers of Korean dances online, following Korean trends online, and creating related content on platforms such as TikTok or Instagram, and even attending events celebrating the Korean culture, as well as events organized by the Korean embassy in Morocco. All of this ultimately marks a strengthened connection to this foreign culture that has made its way to a different continent.

In conclusion, the exchange between the two cultures shows dynamic interactions that will help strengthen the relationship between the two countries and foster cross-cultural connections. Impressively, Moroccan youth seem to be embracing Korean culture through K-pop, as they are expanding their linguistic skills and capacities. Considering how captivating this phenomenon is, many are continuously seeking more opportunities to directly experience Korean culture through the exchange programs and scholarships provided by the Korean government. This interest illustrates a significant desire to embrace a new identity that blends both cultures together.

6. Methodology

6.1. Participants and Sampling

This research was conducted through questionnaires and surveys distributed to various people in the city of Casablanca. Convenience sampling was chosen as the most suitable method for this study. The choice of Casablanca, the largest city in Morocco, is self-explanatory: the high population and diverse communities make it a prime location, as most events related to South Korea are organized there. The targeted population was young people aged 18 to 30. This age range was selected because it represents those most likely to be familiar with Korean culture, engage in related events, and belong to communities and fandoms. The study included 75 participants.

6.2. Design

The adopted approach was quantitative, as it was deemed sufficient to show the results. The goal was to determine whether Korean culture affects Moroccan people and to what extent it integrates into their daily lives. While the quantitative approach facilitates the systematic exploration of broad trends, it is important to recognize that some nuances of cultural influence may not be fully captured by this method alone. Therefore, the findings will be interpreted with an awareness of the potential limitations of this methodology and its capacity to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics between Korean culture and Moroccan society.

6.3. Instruments

This study aims to assess the extent of language contact with Korean culture among young people in Morocco. A survey consisting of ten questions was designed to gather responses on various aspects of engagement with Korean culture. The questions explored respondents' consumption of Korean music, television shows, and fashion, as well as their visits to Korean restaurants and interactions with Korean individuals. Additionally, the survey inquired about respondents' motivations for their interest in Korean culture, their efforts to learn the Korean language, and their use of Korean expressions in daily communication. Respondents were also asked about their following of Korean individuals on social media platforms and whether they felt their daily lives were influenced by Korean culture. The survey was distributed among a diverse sample of individuals residing in Casablanca, Morocco, primarily through online platforms.

6.4. Procedure

The data was collected using Google Forms, with the questionnaires distributed online for convenience. Given that most people are more active on social media platforms, it was advantageous to target individuals who are knowledgeable about Korean culture through Facebook groups or Instagram communities and pages. Once the responses were collected, the same platform was used to compile and analyze the statistics. Each question's responses were analyzed individually and then integrated with other responses to form a comprehensive final analysis. This process provided a detailed understanding of the extent and impact of Korean cultural influence.

6.5. Demographic information

This study targeted 75 participants from the city of Casablanca, Morocco. The individuals were aged between 18 to 30. This age range was more relevant to the study since this demographic is more likely to have engaged with the Korean culture, and was more likely to be familiar with K-pop and Korean dramas through social media platforms.

6.5.1. Gender

Both male and female participants were included in this case study. Female participants represented the majority, as they comprised 77.33% of the sample (58 participants), whereas male participants accounted for only 22.67% (17 participants). There was a significant female presence in the sample, probably due to a higher interest in this matter, as they were more engaged with Korean culture and what it had to offer. This does not mean that male participants aren't interested in Korean culture; perhaps they are simply less active online.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Survey Participants

Gender	Percentage	Number
Male participants	22.67%	17
Female participants	77.33%	58

6.5.2. Occupation

The participants included undergraduates and graduates majoring in fields like engineering, human sciences, and medicine. While this variety did not play an important role in the study, it provides additional context and insight into how these fields might influence interest in Korean culture.

6.5.3. Age

The young participants' age range was between 18 to 30 years old. This represents a dynamic age group that has more ties to the age of globalization, hence their familiarity with the Korean culture through its K-pop and its other aspects. The largest portion of participants, 40% (30 individuals), fell within the 18-21 age range. Another 33.33% (25 participants) were between 22-24 years old, while 20% (15 participants) were aged 25-27. The smallest group consisted of participants aged 28-30, making up 6.67% (5 participants).

Table 2: Age Distribution of Survey Participants

Age	**Percentage**	**Number of participants**
18-21	40%	30
22-24	33.33%	25
25-27	20%	15
28-30	6.67%	5

This study did not give much attention to additional demographic information, because the focus was on how the Korean culture impacted and influenced the lives of these Moroccans to a certain extent.

7. Results and findings

7.1. Presentation of results

Korean language and culture have made a great impact in Casablanca, Morocco. This study examines how Korean cultural elements, such as media, fashion, cuisine, and social interactions, are integrated into the daily lives of the participants. The research explores the diverse motivations behind this interest, including the appeal of popular culture, culinary experiences, and so on. This study aims to highlight the broader implications of Korean cultural influence through analyzing local engagement and perceptions, thus, enriching our understanding of cultural exchange and integration in multicultural urban settings.

1. Do you listen to Korean music?

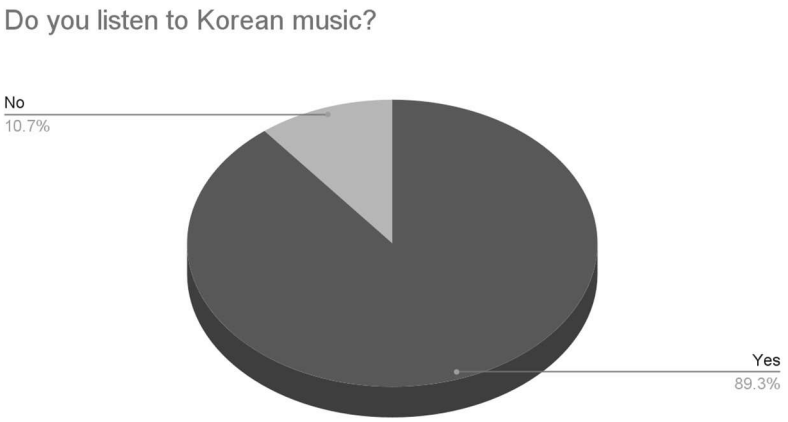

Figure 1. Listeners' Engagement to Korean Music

The question about listening to Korean music serves to assess the participants' engagement with Korean pop culture, particularly in the area of music. The results show that the majority of 89.3% of respondents actively listen to Korean music, indicating a strong connection with this aspect of Korean pop culture. This high level of engagement suggests that Korean music not only resonates widely with the audience in Casablanca but also reflects a broader cultural fascination with Korean pop culture. Identifying participants' connection to Korean music helps the study understand how Korean culture in general affects and integrates into local cultural practices and preferences. This insight is valuable for exploring the broader impact of Korean media and entertainment on global audiences.

2. Do you watch Korean TV shows, dramas… etc?

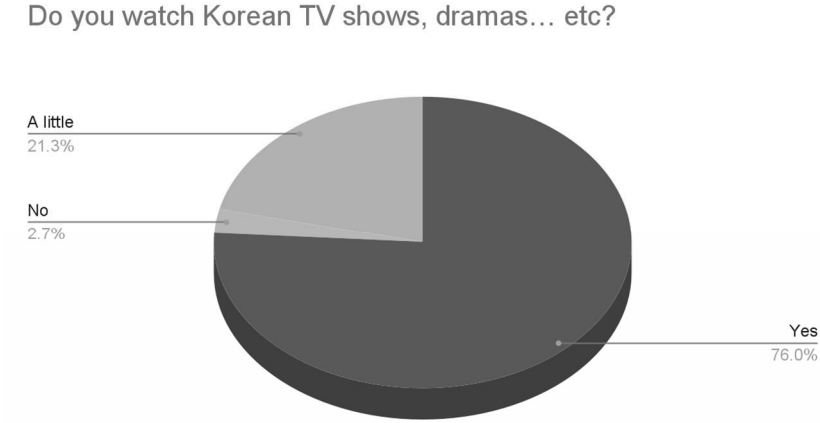

Figure 2. Engagement with Korean TV Shows and Dramas

The survey asked respondents about their viewership habits of Korean television shows and dramas. Results indicate that 76% of participants responded yes, indicating active viewership, while 21.3% indicated occasional viewership. In contrast, the rest of the

participants indicated no engagement with Korean television content. These findings highlight a substantial interest in Korean media. The interest in Korean media comes from its cultural appeal, engaging stories, and easy access. This demonstrates how Korean pop culture influences global media.

3. Do you follow the Korean fashion?

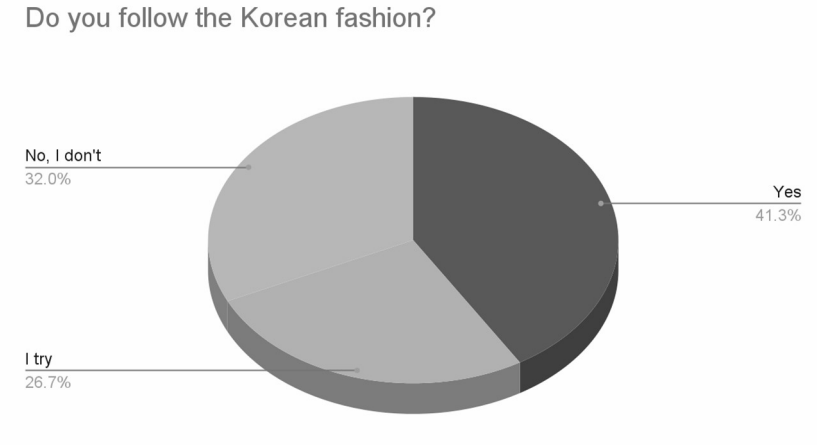

Figure 3. Interest in Korean Fashion

In terms of engagement with Korean fashion, 41.3% of respondents reported actively following these trends, while 26.7% showed modest interest or experimentation. However, an equal percentage of 32% stated no engagement with Korean fashion at all. These findings illustrate a range of attitudes towards Korean fashion within the surveyed population, reflecting both active interest and varying degrees of disinterest or neutrality. The high percentage of active followers suggests a significant influence of Korean fashion, potentially driven by media exposure and cultural appeal. The significant amount of occasional interest indicates potential for higher,

and increased adoption in the future, while the group with no engagement underscores the range of fashion preferences and cultural influences among the respondents.

4. Do you go to any Korean Restaurants or buy any Korean snacks?

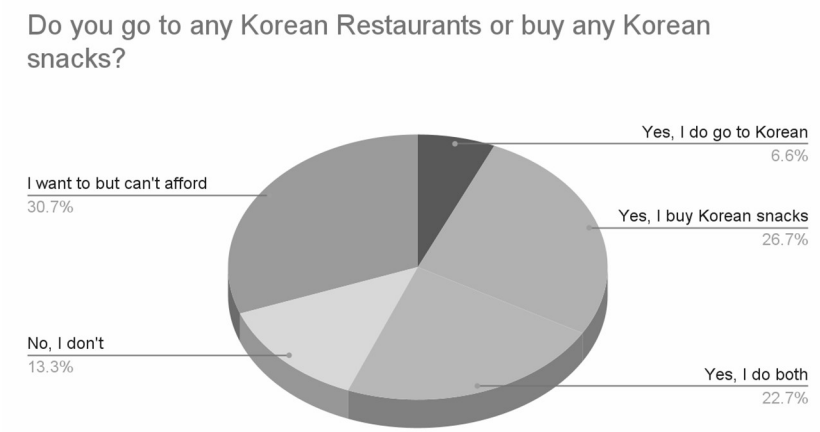

Figure 4. Participation in Korean Culinary Culture

The fourth question explored respondents' behaviors when it comes to Korean cuisine, focusing on whether they visit Korean restaurants or purchase Korean snacks. Results indicate diverse patterns of engagement among participants: 6.7% reported visiting Korean restaurants, 26.7% indicated buying Korean snacks, and an equal percentage of 22.7% reported both activities. In contrast, 13.3% stated no engagement with Korean cuisine, while a significant 30.7% expressed a desire to engage but cited financial constraints. These findings illustrate a spectrum of interest and access barriers to Korean culinary experiences among the participants. Factors influencing these behaviors may include affordability, availability of Korean food options, cultural curiosity, and personal preferences. The reason I

included the option “I want to, but I can’t afford it” is that many of these snacks and restaurants are expensive and not within the buyer’s budget. The results suggest both a growing interest in Korean cuisine and notable barriers that affect its accessibility among respondents.

5. Do you interact with Korean people in your daily life? (in person or online)

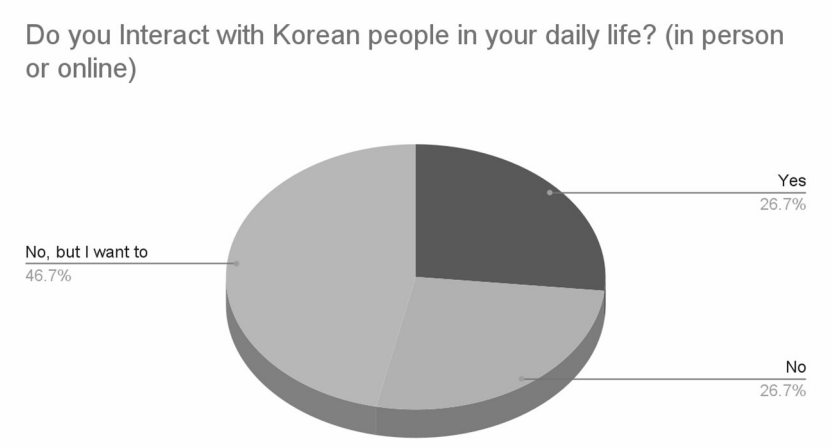

Figure 5. Interaction with Korean Individuals

The fifth question examined respondents' interactions with Korean individuals in their daily lives, whether in person or online. Results show different levels of interaction with Korean people among participants: 26.7% reported actively engaging with Koreans, either in person or online, while 26.7% have no current interactions. Notably, 46.7% expressed a desire to interact with Koreans. These findings highlight a strong interest in cross-cultural interactions with Koreans among participants, even though many are not currently engaging in

such interactions. Factors influencing these responses may include limited access to Korean communities, language barriers, opportunities for cultural exchange, and personal networks. The results suggest potential opportunities for fostering cultural exchanges and connections between individuals interested in Korean culture and Korean communities.

6. Why are you interested in the Korean culture?

Table 3. Themes, Frequencies, and Examples of Interest in Korean Culture

Theme	**Frequency**	**Sample Responses**
Music (K-pop)	19	"I love the music and the culture is rich", "I love their music and dance", "Because of Kpop"
Language	11	"I'm captivated and fascinated with the language", "The language and the food were the first thing that interested me!"
Curiosity and Interest	8	"It's interesting and fun to get to explore other cultures", "Because it's amazing"
Food	3	"The food, the language, the music", "Fun shows/movies and delicious food!"
Cultural Uniqueness	12	"I'm interested in the Korean culture because I find it unique", "it is a beautiful culture, rich and interesting."
Learning & Curiosity	1	"It opens my eyes on different horizons, ideologies, and overall a different culture I'm not familiar with."
Media (K-drama/Shows)	2	"I like to watch their dramas", "Most of the Korean culture interests me, including the K-drama"

Theme	Frequency	Sample Responses
Travel and Experiences	1	"I'm grateful I got the chance to visit South Korea. It was the best trip I've ever had."
Fashion and Aesthetics	2	"Fashion is incredible", "I like their food, clothes, and music."

The open-ended question about why respondents are interested in Korean culture revealed a range of reasons. Common ones included a fascination with Korean pop culture like K-pop and K-dramas, a love for Korean food and its flavors, admiration for Korea's history and art, curiosity about cultural differences, and a desire to explore new cultures. Many respondents also expressed appreciation for opportunities to visit South Korea or engage with Korean culture directly. These findings show that Korean culture appeals to people through its mix of tradition and modernity, artistic achievements, and unique values, highlighting the diverse reasons behind global interest in Korean cultural exports.

7. Did you ever try to learn the Korean language?

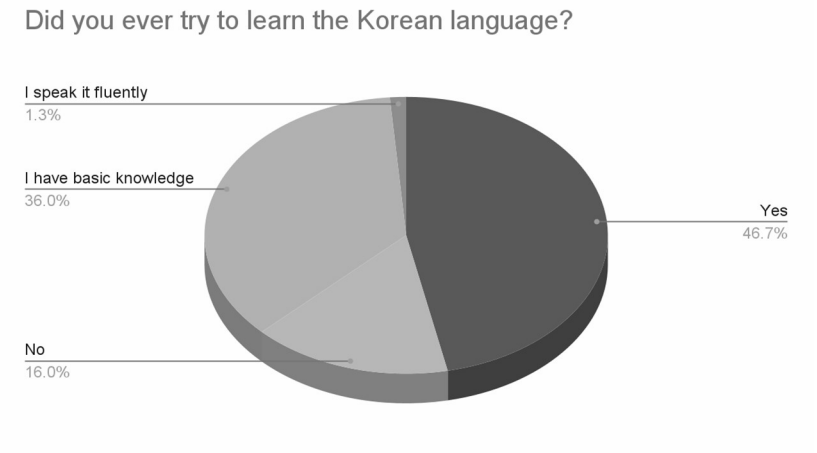

Figure 6. Attempts to Learn the Korean Language

The seventh question explored respondents' experiences with learning the Korean language. The results showed different levels of proficiency and interest among participants: 46.7% reported attempting to learn Korean, 16% stated no previous attempts, 36% indicated basic knowledge of the language, and a small percentage (1.3%) reported fluency. This reflects on the interest in language acquisition among the surveyed population, with a substantial proportion having basic proficiency in Korean. The responses may be shaped by exposure to Korean media, cultural appeal, or a personal fascination with languages. The results emphasize a strong global interest in learning Korean, illustrating its importance as a bridge to more profound engagement with Korean culture and communication.

8. Do you use any Korean expressions in your daily life?

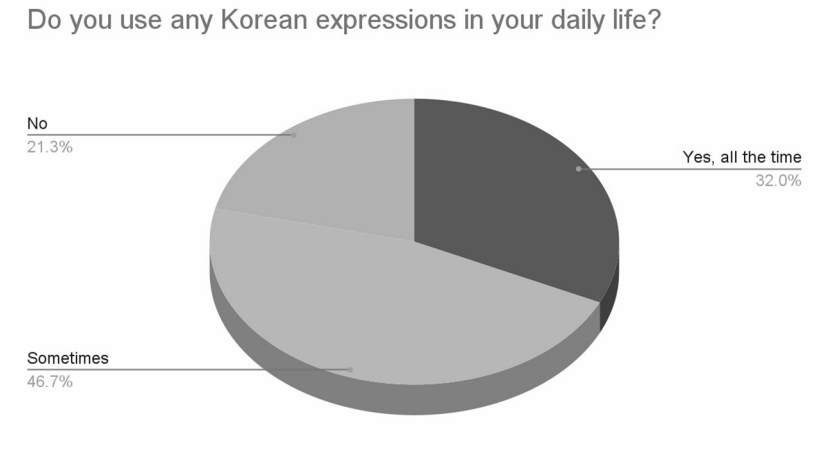

Figure 7. Usage of Korean Expressions in Daily Life

The eighth question investigated how often respondents use Korean expressions in their daily lives. The results reveal that 32% of

participants use these expressions regularly, 46.7% use them occasionally, and 21.3% do not use them at all. This indicates different levels of familiarity with Korean language elements. Frequent users likely have regular exposure to Korean media or a strong interest in the language, while occasional users have some familiarity. Non-users show minimal interaction with Korean expressions. Overall, these findings illustrate the range of engagement with Korean language elements, from regular use to minimal or no use at all.

9. Do you follow Korean people on Social Media? (celebrities and famous people included)

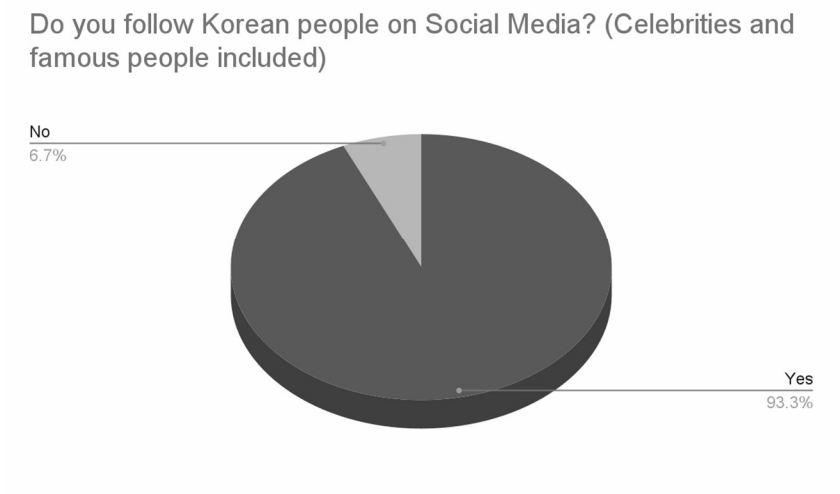

Figure 8. Engagement with Korean Personalities on Social Media

The ninth question explored how respondents use social media to follow Korean individuals, including celebrities and prominent figures. The results reveal a high level of engagement: 93.3% of participants follow Korean people on social media, while 6.7% do not. This indicates a strong interest in Korean celebrities among those surveyed. The reasons for this engagement include admiration for

Korean pop culture icons, exposure to various media, and the role of social media in shaping global cultural trends. Additionally, following these figures online can enhance users' knowledge of the Korean language and culture, potentially increasing their interest and impact. These findings highlight how social media fosters cross-cultural connections and supports global fan communities centered around Korean personalities.

10. Would you say that your daily life is influenced by the Korean culture?

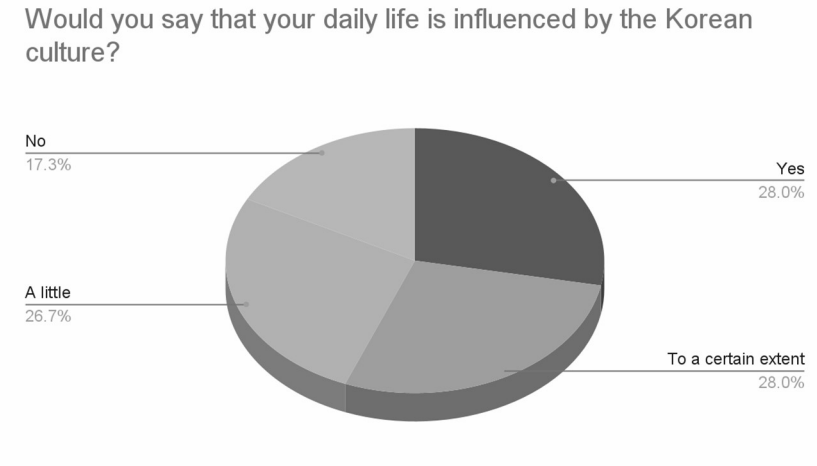

Figure 9. Influence of Korean Culture on Daily Life

The tenth and final question sought to explore how Korean culture impacts the daily lives of respondents. The results show a range of influence: 28% felt a significant impact, 28% experienced a moderate effect, 26.7% noticed a minor influence, and 17.3% reported no influence from Korean culture. These findings reveal how differently Korean cultural elements are integrated into daily routines. The responses might be shaped by factors such as exposure to Korean

media, consumption of Korean products, interactions with Korean individuals, and personal interest in Korean culture. This highlights the varied ways Korean culture touches people's lives around the world. While respondents noted different levels of influence, they may not always be fully aware of how deep this impact can be. The results emphasize the complex and sometimes subtle ways Korean culture influences individuals globally.

7.2. Discussion

The results of this study highlight the significant impact of Korean culture among young adults in Casablanca, Morocco. The findings show that Korean pop culture serves as a gateway to cultural integration, especially K-pop and K-drama. Gender might influence this engagement, as females were the primary consumers of these media forms and their content.

Korean fashion was also considered a draw for many, indicating a growing trend among Moroccan youth. Nevertheless, culinary experiences faced some barriers; many participants reported being unable to explore these experiences due to affordability issues. Specifically, 30.7% expressed a desire to try Korean cuisine but could not for similar reasons.

Another important aspect of accessing a culture is contact with its people. Participants showed interest in getting to know Koreans through online platforms or in real life, highlighting the positive potential for fostering intercultural interaction. Additionally, respondents expressed a strong interest in learning the language, suggesting a desire for both cultural and linguistic exchanges.

Overall, the study reveals that Korean culture is reshaping and transforming the preferences and lifestyles of young Moroccans, eventually leading to a hybrid culture. These influences serve as a pathway toward understanding multicultural contexts. Future research

could delve deeper into specific cultural shifts and the long-term impacts of these cultural interactions.

8. Conclusion

The survey highlights a significant global fascination with Korean culture, particularly through media like K-pop and dramas, which resonate widely. This reflects a profound impact of South Korean pop culture on people's lives, including young Moroccans. Respondents show considerable interest in learning Korean, trying Korean cuisine, and adopting Korean fashion, despite facing challenges such as high costs. This interest stems from a deep appreciation for Korean aesthetics and entertainment, alongside curiosity about the language and history.

The study effectively addresses its key questions: the impact of foreign cultures, especially South Korean pop culture, on Moroccan lives; the blending of these influences with local traditions to form a unique cultural mix; and how these influences shape young Moroccans' choices in entertainment, fashion, and purchasing habits. The findings reveal a dynamic interplay where Korean cultural elements are both integrated into and reshape local practices, illustrating the evolving nature of cultural exchange.

While some respondents report a strong influence of Korean culture in their daily lives, others experience it more subtly. This variation is influenced by factors such as media exposure, personal connections, and cultural opportunities. The results underscore how Korean culture enriches global diversity and fosters cross-cultural understanding, demonstrating its lasting appeal and impact. Further research with larger and more representative samples could provide deeper insights into these cultural interactions and their broader implications.

Conflict of interest statement:

The author states that there is no conflict of interest to disclose.

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