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# K-Book Trends

offers Korea's highly informative publishing content  
to those in the global publishing industry.

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## TOPIC

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## South Korea's Publishing Industry in H1 2019 and Forecasts for H2

**Local publishing industry issues seen through bestseller and reader data analyses**

Written by Ryu Young-ho  
(Director of Kyobo Book Centre's content business division)

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What kind of changes took place in the first half of 2019 for South Korea's publishing industry? First of all, typical for the first six months of every year, there were many books that looked back on the previous year and set new goals for the current year. Books that carried serious ruminations about life were snapped up by readers. And for the first time in a long time, liberal arts books -mostly philosophical books, did better than books in other categories. Befitting the age of new media, various programs introducing books could be seen on television, YouTube and podcasts. Also, due to a controversy over the Korean language section of South Korea's national college entrance exam last year, educational books on the Korean language saw a surge in interest. This year will mark

the 100th anniversary of the March 1 independence movement against Japanese colonial rule in Korea and the temporary Korean government that was established then. Sales of books on history have naturally increased, while books written by poets and novelists given new cover designs to meet recent trends were also popular.

Below is an explanation of the data from Kyobo Book Centre's "2019 H1 Book Sales and Bestseller Analysis" report. When organized by genre, liberal arts books and publications on employment and job certifications rose year-on-year. Books on philosophy and psychology received high interest, and liberal arts books on a whole saw a 13.1 percent sales growth from a year earlier. Sales of books related to children, babies, life at home and cooking also grew. Meanwhile, sales of novels dropped 14.1 percent on a yearly basis, while travel guidebooks also fared badly, challenged by mobile apps and real-time information provided on social media. Based on the number of books sold, educational books sales for middle to high school students took up 11.1 percent of total sales to mark the biggest portion for the first half of 2019. Books for children also saw growth while liberal arts books, after reporting tepid sales last year, touted a 7.7 percent share of sales.

When organized by readers' gender, female readers continued to buy more books than men, making up 60.7 percent of reader sales. When categorized by age, readers in their 40s have been buying increasingly more books. Their interest in books is expected to

grow as that particular generation has been found to purchase diverse types of books, from workbooks for their children, to literature, hobby-related books and technical books. Women in their 40s accounted for 21.5 percent of all readers, emerging as the core reader base for South Korea's publishing industry.

<Percentage shares of readers categorized by gender, age>

Age	Men	Women	Total
Younger than 10 years	0.8%	1.2%	2.0%
20s	7.3%	12.8%	20.1%
30s	9.7%	17.9%	27.6%
40s	11.4%	21.5%	32.9%
50s	7.0%	6.1%	13.1%
Over 60	3.1%	1.2%	4.3%
Total	39.3%	60.7%	100%

How sales channels for books have changed has been something to focus on. Mobile purchases on phones have risen sharply compared to offline or regular online sales. Other consumer goods have seen demand from mobile applications, but this change for books has been unique in the fact that traditionally, books have been consumer goods that readers looked at physically before purchasing them. In the case of Kyobo Book Centre, its direct delivery service where users can purchase a book on the store's app and receive the physical book at a store branch has played a big part in boosting

mobile purchases. In the first half of this year, mobile purchases took up 27.8 percent of all sales, overtaking web sales.

When looking at bestseller trends overall for the first half of 2019, they can simply be summarized into 'the return of liberal arts'. Buddhist monk Haemin Sunim's *Love for Imperfect Things* stood at number one in terms of overall sales in the first six months of the year, followed by Yamaguchi Shu's *How Philosophy Becomes a Weapon of Life*. In 2018, not one book on liberal arts made it to the top ten list. However, this year in the first half, *How Philosophy Becomes a Weapon of Life* and *The 12 Rules of Life* both made it to the top ten, showing how liberal arts has made a comeback. When looking at the top 100 bestselling books, there were 19 liberal arts related books on the list, making it the most popular out of any other genre. When looking at percentage shares per genre, liberal arts surpassed those of its old competitors like poetry, novels and essays.

In the first half of 2019, demand became more balanced whereas previously it was more one-sided, creating a meaningful change. The top 10 bestseller list shows the consumer gender imbalance has become more balanced, with the ratio of female to male book purchasers standing at 6:4 in the first half of 2019. When looking at genres, there were 5 essay collections in the top 10 list, extending their popularity from 2018. Kim Su-hyun's *I Have Decided to Live As Me* and poet Na Tae-ju's *I See You As I Would A Flower* would

be representative of the genre, which showed more diversity this year in a positive change.

<Sales shares of top 10 bestsellers in H1 2018 based on gender>

Position	Book Title	Men	Women
1	<i>How To Respond Smiling To A Rude Person</i> (Gana)	21.3%	78.7%
2	<i>Ji-young Kim Born in '82</i> (Minumsa)	21.9%	78.1%
3	<i>Every Moment Was You</i> (Wisdom House)	31.8%	68.2%
4	<i>Pooh Bear, Happiness Comes Every Day</i> (RH Korea)	22.1%	77.9%
5	<i>Temperature of Language</i> (Malgeulteo)	33.1%	66.9%
6	<i>The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck</i> (Galleon)	40.6%	59.4%
7	<i>I Have Decided To Live As Me</i> (Maumsup)	21.7%	78.3%
8	<i>Miracles of the Namiya General Store</i> (Hyundae Munhak)	31.3%	68.7%
9	<i>Word Plate</i> (Cassiopeia)	28.3%	71.7%
10	<i>The Whereabouts of Love</i> (Somi Media)	27.6%	72.4%

<Sales shares of top 10 bestsellers in H1 2019 based on gender>

Position	Book Title	Men	Women
1	<i>Love for Imperfect Things</i> (Suo Books)	33.5%	66.5%
2	<i>How Philosophy Becomes a Weapon of Life</i> (Dasan Chodang)	52.9%	47.1%
3	<i>I Have Decided To Live As Me</i> (Maumsup)	26.4%	73.6%
4	<i>Why Travel</i> (Munhakdongne)	31.0%	6.0%
5	<i>Pooh Bear, Happiness Comes Every Day</i> (RH Korea)	29.9%	73.1%
6	<i>I See You As I Would A Flower</i> (Jihye)	30.9%	69.1%
7	<i>The Murder Incident of the Stuffed Doll</i> (Book Plaza)	33.0%	67.0%
8	<i>The 12 Rules of Life</i> (Maven)	52.3%	47.7%
9	<i>I Accidentally Worked Hard At Life</i> (Woongjin Jisikhouse)	31.3%	68.7%
10	<i>The Irreversible Promise</i> (Book Plaza)	36.8%	63.2%

Another key trend for the first half of the year was that female authors published many books. Novels had fallen into a slight rut, and female writers were the saving grace for the genre. Cho Nam-joo's *Ji-young Kim Born in '82* topped the list for novels, and the book's popularity shows no sign of slowing down. In addition to Cho, other young female authors have been enjoying high demand, like Kim Geum-hee, Kim Ae-ran, Lee Do-woo and Choi Eun-young. Gu Byung-mo and Chung Se-rang saw three books each make it to the top 30 bestselling novel list. Among the top 10 bestselling novels in South Korea, eight were written by female authors (the other two were award recipients), showing their active performance. However, on an overall basis, the share of novels for sales shrank to 7.3 percent this year from 9.1 percent a year ago. The number of published books was similar this year, but the lack of popular media-sellers or giant bestsellers led to a dismal number of sales.

As mentioned above, the number of readers in their 40s, including men and women alike, has been increasing rapidly. The portion of the age group out of all readers stood at 22.7 percent in 2010. The same age group made up 32.9 percent of all readers in the first half of 2019, making it the biggest share out of all age groups. This boost in readers in their 40s had a big influence on book purchasing trends. Particularly, this age group was seen buying books for their children from books for young children to educational workbooks for middle to high school students. In 2010, 24-year-olds (born in

1986) bought the most books that year, whereas the next year again saw 24-year-olds (born in 1987) buy the most books. However, in 2016, this jumped to 46 (born in 1970) and has remained above 40 since then. As of the end of June this year, 41-year-olds have (born in 1978) have purchased the most books so far.

Despite the sluggishness in the publishing market, more young children have started to read books, leading to a boost in sales of fairy tales and book series. Sales in the first half of the year for children's books rose 13.5 percent, and the genre accounted for 7.9 percent of all sales. Readers tended to prefer books that offered both education and entertainment like Heena Baek's *I Am A Dog* (Bear Books), Seol Min-seok's *Seol Min-seok's Great Adventure into Korean History* (iHuman) and *Genius Butt Detective and the Curry Mystery* (Iseum). Also, in spite of economic difficulties nationwide, South Koreans spent more on education and workbooks than a year ago. This focus on education affected sales of workbooks for elementary, middle and high school students. Workbook sales for elementary school students jumped 33.4 percent on-year, and English workbooks for children saw sales grow 18.4 percent over the same period. Educational book sales for middle to high school students also marked double-digit growth, showing sustained interest by consumers in education.

In the first half of 2019, media-sellers like books that featured in movies, television dramas or were turned into adaptations did not

gain much interest. In contrast, books exposed by new media drew attention. Due to this new influence, several books that put together content from popular podcasts, including foreign languages, liberal arts and art in general, were published. YouTube channels were a hot topic in the book market in the start of 2019. The power that 'booktubers' have by summarizing books on their YouTube channels has grown and bestsellers that are featured on such channels have shot up in popularity. Books that were published years ago like Oprah Winfrey's *What I Know For Sure* (Book House) and Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist* (Munhakdongne) have both seen popularity anew thanks to these YouTubers, rising to become bestsellers again.

E-books sustained steady growth in the first half of 2019. Out of all genres that were provided in digital format, BL (Boys' Love) stories and romance novels have been the most popular. Novels accounted for 62.5 percent of all e-book sales in the first half of 2019, making it the central genre for the industry. The number of new e-book readers has also been on the rise, thanks to genre literature. Unlimited subscription services have grown popular among young readers with their competitive pricing. Distributors are signing exclusive contracts directly with writers and agencies for publications and series uploads to dominate more content on the market. In the physical book market, novels have been on the decline, but novels in the e-book market shot up 48.9 percent from a year ago, increasing its growth from last year. More exclusive



content for e-books is being continuously developed, including audiobooks and multimedia e-books. In general, novels that were originally comics or e-books based on novels have received good responses.

<Number of Book Unit Sales and Percentage Share for Genre Literature e-Books>

Genres	Growth in sold units		Percentage Share
	2018	2019	2019
Romance	5.8%	56.6%	54.4%
Martial Arts	20.4%	-10.1%	4.4%
Fantasy	-9.4%	15.4%	15.5%
Light Novels	118.1%	132.4%	4.3%
BL	50.5%	72.7%	20.6%
Adult Novels	—	147.2%	0.8%
Total	11.0%	48.9%	100%

In the second half of 2019, the trends seen in the first six months are expected to go on. Novels are expected to make a bit of a comeback compared to the weakness they have shown so far, thanks to the return of authors like Jo Jung-rae, Jeong You-jeong, Choi Eun-young and Bernard Werber. The latest publications from popular Korean authors like Kim Young-ha, Rhyu Si-min and Choi Tae-seong have risen in popularity as the authors have appeared on multimedia programs. Readers' interest in economics, management, science and philosophy in step with the age of the 4th industrial revolution is expected to continue, and the industry

expects more books dealing with these subjects to enter the market. Topics of interest also include historical relations between South Korea and Japan, which are currently a big issue in the news due to bilateral political tussles. Books on peace between the two Koreas and the United States are projected to be popular. Publications that aim to help readers understand social conflicts between gender groups and age groups will also attract consumers, while more books are expected to be published on future forecasts, the upcoming U.S. presidential election and South Korea's parliamentary election. As we are living in an age of swift change in politics, the economy, the society and culture, these issues are expected to affect publishing plans and production.

In the case of the distribution market, physical books are expected to be distributed mainly by large-scale bookstores and enterprise used-book store chains. However, the popularity of independent bookstores is expected to go on. When considering the high usage rate of smartphones in South Korea, online and mobile sales of books are expected to continue rising in the second half of the year. The e-book market will also see expansion in the second half thanks to genre literature. For the rest of the year, the e-book market is likely to see competition grow in earnest between providers of subscription services and creators of original content. In the age of smart media, readers are now listening to books more rather than reading them with their eyes. Globally, audiobooks are seeing high interest, and in South Korea, companies that have audio

platforms like Naver, Kyobo Book Centre, Audien and Podbbang have been expanding their investments and services. The South Korean government and other institutions have also been pursuing their own audiobook support projects. In the second half of 2019, the publishing industry is projected to see more diverse attempts and meaningful growth in all media and channels, including production, distribution and reading activities.

\* Research from <2019 H1 Book Sales and Bestseller Analysis (Kyobo Book Centre)>

**SPECIAL PROJECT**

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# North Korea Seen Through Books, and the Unification of the Korean Peninsula

Written by Lee Youngjong  
(JoongAng Daily news Director, Unification Research Institute)

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On the last day of June this year, a historic event happened in the border village of Panmunjom straddling the two Koreas when the leaders of the United States and North Korea met for the first time. Just a mere 62 km away from Seoul, this location was where the ceasefire armistice was signed in July 1953 to put a stop to the Korean War that had raged for three years between North and South Korea. Although U.S. President Donald Trump stepped over to North Korea for just a minute and met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for 53 minutes, the image of the two men shaking hands heightened hopes that the Korean peninsula could move further towards denuclearization and peace.

There are several books that address this reality on the Korean

peninsula that have received much interest from the publishing industry in South Korea. Books that help children and adolescents understand the reality of the divided Korean peninsula and the need for unification are also being published consistently.

One of these publications is by Seol Min-seok, a popular South Korean lecturer on Korean history, called *Seol Min-seok's Big Unification Adventure* (iHuman). The book aims to educate and entertain readers at the same time with comics and a storyline that goes from the present to the past and vice versa. It features the story of a young child and his mother who are separated in a train near Hamheung heading south in December of 1950 when the Korean War was at its height. By moving back and forth between different areas and varying points in time, the story also underscores the importance of family reunions for those who were separated by the war.

*The Delicious Story of North Korea* (Pakyoungsa) features the everyday lives of North Korean children from their first day at school to field trips, exams at school, vacations and birthday parties. The book is comprised of two parts - 'The Story of North Korea by Chungsong' and 'The Story of South Korea by Yuna', helping readers understand both Koreas simultaneously.

With the DMZ (demilitarized zone) as the backdrop, the Eco Horizon Institute in South Korea published *DMZ Expedition*

(Hanulim) after traveling to parts inside the actual DMZ. The book describes their experiences and the results of their research, including wild animals that live there like seals, spoonbills, mountain goats and trout. It also describes the plant life there including willow trees, the hanabusaya Nakai flower and sundews. The book takes readers to different geographical terrains inside the DMZ like the mouth of the Han River, Yangeuidae wetlands, Dragon swamp and Cholwon plains. It also details cultural aspects and historic sites like the Maldeung clam pile, the Bunori Dondae Fort and Aegibong, helping readers appreciate their value. Through this book, children can learn about the countless lives that call the DMZ home and think about the environment of South Korea in addition to the country's culture and history.

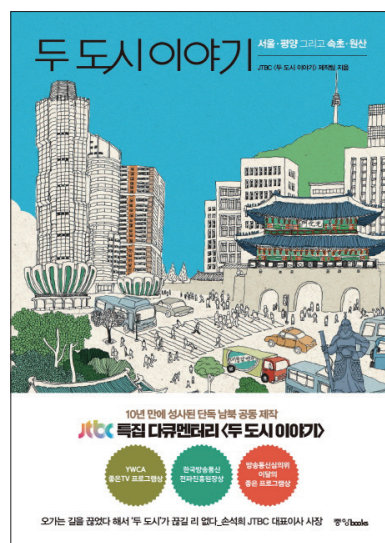


*Seol Min-seok's Big Unification Adventure, The Delicious Story of North Korea, DMZ Expedition*

The fact that there have been more books recently shedding light on the reality of the divided Korean peninsula and the possibility of inter-Korean harmony and unification can be attributed to



the summit talks between North and South Korea as well as the meeting between Trump and Kim. *The Tale of Two Cities* (JoongAng Books) explains the story of Seoul and Pyongyang, the capitals of South and North Korea respectively with Panmunjom and the DMZ as opposites, in order to showcase the differences and similarities between North and South Korea. The book was based on a special documentary by South Korean broadcaster JTBC co-produced by teams from both Koreas. One unique point in the book would be a deep dive into North Korean kitchens, including that of Okryugwan, the renowned cold noodle restaurant in North Korea, to explain cooking processes there. Readers can enjoy the photographs from diverse locations in North and South Korea in addition to Pyongyang and Seoul, like Sokcho and Wonsan. The book also features snapshots of Mount Kumgang and North Korean food.



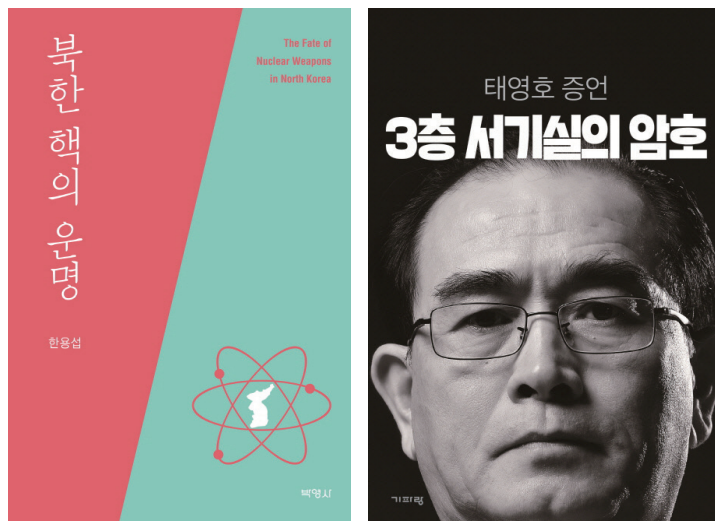
*The Tale of Two Cities, Pyongyang and After Pyongyang*

A book that looks at North Korea under Kim Jong Un's rule from an architect's point of view, *Pyongyang and After Pyongyang* (Hyohyung) is unique in its endeavor. Called the city of juche revolution, Pyongyang has been the symbol of the North Korean regime, but it has been frozen in time since the regime faced a crisis in the mid-1990s. Reflecting the weakened North Korean economy, the book focuses on Pyongyang and the political, economic structures that have made Pyongyang the city it is today. It also provides a glimpse into the blueprint of a unified Korea by forecasting how Pyongyang could change in the future and the possibilities it has.

Books that deal with worries and responses against North Korea's nuclear capabilities and missiles, hopes for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and possible roadmaps toward denuclearization have seen an uptick in demand. An expert in nuclear conflicts, Korea National Defense University's Professor Han Yong-sup has written a book called *The Destiny of North Korea's Nuclear Power* (Pakyoungsa). It details the nuclear development policy and processes taken by the three generations of the North's Kim family, starting from Kim Il-sung, the founder of North Korea, to his son Kim Jong-il and the current leader of the North, Kim Jong-un. The book also discusses the actual possibility of denuclearization in North Korea and limitations by looking back on nuclear discussions between North and South Korea in the early 1990s and nuclear negotiations that began between North Korea



and the United States in June 1993. The writer suggests the chair countries of the United Nations' Security Council should vow to keep the non-proliferation treaty (NPT) to prevent other countries from attempting to develop nuclear capabilities going forward.

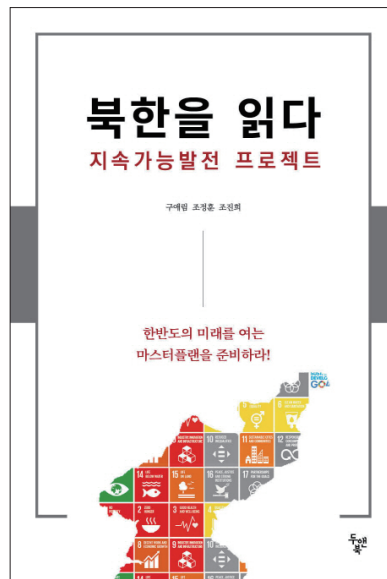


*The Destiny of North Korea's Nuclear Power, Cypher of the Third-Floor Secretariat*

Those wishing to learn about the stark reality of North Korea's regime should read the bestseller from Thae Yong-ho, who was a North Korean diplomat in the United Kingdom who defected to South Korea in 2016. His book, *Cypher of the Third-Floor Secretariat*, narrates details of the hidden stories inside North Korea's power structure experienced by Thae himself when he was working for the North Korean government. In the book, Thae describes events like when North Korea had attempted to invite the Pope to the North, but scrapped the plan out of fears a boom in Catholicism could spread across the country once and if he did visit North Korea. Other intriguing details in the book include how candles were the most

preferred gift from those who were returning from stints abroad as North Korea's power supplies are strained. Thae concludes in the book that North Korea is a modern slave society.

Books on economic inter-Korean cooperation or investment in North Korea like the reopening of the Kaesong industrial complex or resumption of tourism in Mount Kumgang once international sanctions are lifted after the denuclearization of the North have drawn readers' interest. *Reading North Korea - A Sustainable Project* (Do&Book) is a guide to investing in North Korea written by three experts on North Korean issues. As readers can spot from the subheading - 'Prepare a masterplan to open the future for a new Korean peninsula!' - the book offers three things: one, a close look into a development model for North Korea that is desperately needed; two, a look into where North Korea is today; and three, what a sustainable development frame would look like from North Korea's point of view. The book says efforts to free the people of North Korea, one of the poorest countries in the world, from poverty and famine, is necessary and needed quickly, but emergency aid or one-faceted development help has had too many side effects until now and could be inefficient judging from previous attempts. Cho Jin-hee, one of the co-authors for the book and an executive at Samjong KPMG's business support center for North Korea, has stressed development and help that is structural and productive and that is focused on the sustainable advancement of North Korea should take place.



*Reading North Korea - A Sustainable Project*

The meeting between the leaders of North Korea and the United States at Panmunjom did heighten hopes for denuclearization and peace on the Korean peninsula. The issue still at hand is that despite the brief summit between them, a solution is still needed to unravel the fundamental problems that surround North Korea's nuclear development program and the Korean peninsula in general. North Korea is still being pressured by sanctions from the United Nations and the international community for engaging in provocations like missile launches and nuclear tests, so there are still many difficulties ahead before the two Koreas are ever unified. It is likely because of this that readers are being attracted to the latest books from South Korea's publishing industry which allow them to take a look inside Kim Jong-un's thoughts, forecast the Korean peninsula's future and prepare for unification or future investment in North Korea.

## EXPORT CASE

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# South Korea's National Institute of Ecology - Known for publishing content acclaimed worldwide

Arranged by Kim Yu-mi

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South Korea's National Institute of Ecology operated by the country's Ministry of Environment calls itself 'another little Earth' with its exhibits of various plants and animals from countries around the world, including South Korea. The institute also publishes a diverse range of books on the environment for everyone from children to experts. Recently, the institute exported publishing rights of 13 books to Vietnam and Turkey, and some of them have

already been translated and introduced to the local markets there. This year, seven books including *The Facts Within the Fairy Tales: Aesop's Stories of Nature* will be released in Vietnam, while another called *Exploring the World of Ant* will be sold in Turkey. *K-Book Trends* spoke with the institute's publishing arm, NIE PRESS, to hear about the agency's book export cases and their passion for content.

Many people believe the National Institute of Ecology is just for research on the environment and related exhibits. It was quite interesting to hear that a state-run institute has its own publishing department and is even exporting their books. Could you tell us about some of the projects you're working on?

The National Institute of Ecology is a national institute that carries out research on the environment, makes efforts to preserve the environment and in that process, opens related exhibitions and education classes. We aim to increase the country's competitiveness by taking the lead in ecology research and provide an area for diverse experiences and learning opportunities for the general public to boost their knowledge of the environment. On top of this, the National Institute of Ecology creates different forms of content from the results of our research, exhibitions and education to spread awareness on environment culture. Our publishing department was established for that purpose in May 2015.

The institute aims to provide tailored content for everyone from

young children to members of the general public and experts and to help them understand the content easily. We have fairy tales featuring the ecology for children and environment education books for the general public and experts. In addition to these, we also have content ready for the disabled, like videos with sign language and books in braille. We've also introduced digital content to our archive, like content using AR (augmented reality).

We heard *Ecology+Creative Art*, a five-book series from the institute, was published and is being sold in Turkey. Please tell us what other books have been exported by the institute.



*Ecology+ Creative Art - The Tropics,  
The facts within the Fairy Tales - Talmud Stories of Nature, Exploring the World of Ant*

At NIE PRESS, we've been publishing a variety of books to spread international awareness on ecology-related issues. Among the books published, our *The Facts Within the Fairy Tales* series has been exported to many countries after having received awards and other accolades for delivering content on plants and animal

life through classic folks stories or idioms from South Korea and elsewhere.

With our initial export of *Exploring the World of Ant* in 2017 to Turkey, we exported our *Ecology+Creative Art* series there the following year. That same year, we managed to export two books from the *The Facts Within the Fairy Tales* series and all five books of the *Ecology+Creative Art* series to Vietnam. Of these, the *Ecology+Creative Art* series was translated and released in 2018 in Turkey, and all the other books are now being translated and designed for release sometime this year. Because Korean culture is receiving more attention globally and international interest in ecology is on the rise, our hopes are high the books will see much demand overseas.

It sounds like the books from the National Institute of Ecology have enough competitiveness to be acknowledged outside South Korea.

NIE PRESS has been utilizing the results from the institute's various research, exhibitions and education projects to develop and publish a variety of books. The institute's biggest competitive edge would be the fact that the institute employs many diverse experts on plants and animals, like researchers, veterinarians, ecology narrators, ecology lecturers and plant and animal rangers. With these experts on different plant and animal life inside and outside South Korea, NIE PRESS holds planning meetings to set themes. The experts are involved in the entire publishing process



like selecting photographs and other research material on ecology, writing and editing. Because they are deeply involved in the entire process for our book publications, we are confident the books will be competitive inside and outside South Korea thanks to the expertise and trustworthiness of the books' content.

Not only does the institute export books overseas, but we also hear you've been doing other good things too. We heard the institute is working with the Korea-Asia Friendship Foundation to provide books of excellence from South Korea to developing Asian countries.

In the early stages of the institute's content business, we were mulling over ways to provide our books for education on ecology translated into different languages to multinational families in South Korea, because their numbers were growing then. At that time the Korea-Asia Friendship Foundation reached out to us and suggested we work with them. The foundation had already started distributing South Korean books to developing Asian countries and multicultural family support centers in South Korea. The institute provided book data in consideration of the socially disadvantaged and to inform others about ecological culture.





*The Journey of the Twirling Water Droplet, Endangered Animals*

Our *Eco Stories* series that introduces the work ecologists do includes a book called *The Journey of the Twirling Water Droplet* that teaches readers about what effects climate change has on the environment. The second book in the series, called *Endangered Animals* explores how changes in nature and the greed of man have influenced the planet, including endangering animal and plant species. The Korea-Asia Friendship Foundation has been translating books produced by the National Institute of Ecology and plans to provide them to elementary schools in Cambodia and regional multicultural family support centers in South Korea.

We've also heard the institute directly participates in major book fairs to promote its books, like the Seoul International Book Fair and the Bologna Children's Book Fair.

It's important to produce good books, but we also think it's equally important to provide readers with the opportunity to read our

books. But the options that government institutions have can be quite limited, so we've been looking into book fair participation and promoting the various awards and recognition our books have received.

Taking part in international book fairs has especially paid off as there were non-Korean publishers who took an interest in our work during the book fairs. This interest eventually led to the export of some of our books. We've been operating exhibition and promotion booths every year at events like the Seoul International Book Fair, the annual Korea reading festival and the Seoul International Young Children Education and Kids Fair. In order to inform the international audience about what we do and the excellence of our publications, we presented our books at the Bologna Children's Book Fair from 2016 to 2018. This year we plan to do the same at the Frankfurt Book Fair in October.

By participating in book promotion events inside and outside South Korea, we've been able to listen to readers directly and expand our horizons by experiencing different books from countries around the world. We hope these efforts will contribute to our potential in the future to create even better books.

At this point, we're curious as to what results the institute has seen so far through its books. Could you tell us about the awards some of your books have received and what the books were?

Our most representative publication would be *The Facts Within the Fairy Tales* series. This book series for children was planned to help

young minds absorb wisdom from classic stories and information on the environment at the same time. With *Aesop's Stories of Nature* starting the series in 2015, we published six more in the series, including *Andersen's Stories of Nature*, *Grimm Brother's Stories of Nature*, *Talmud Stories of Nature* and *World's Proverbs of Nature*. This August we plan to publish the eighth installation in the series called *World's Folktales of Nature*. Of these, *Aesop's Stories of Nature* received the South Korean government's recognition as a book of excellence in science in 2016. After that, *Korean Folktales of Nature* and *Andersen's Stories of Nature* both received the same recognition in 2017 and 2018, *Grimm Brother's Stories of Nature* did as well. In 2017, the series won bronze at the 2017 Stevie Awards, proving its excellence in content.



*The Heaven of Migrating Birds - Seochon Yubu Island,  
Goggle-eyed Gobies That Won Against AI Muddybots*

In the first half of 2018, *The Heaven of Migrating Birds - Seochon Yubu Island* was given the Sejong award of excellence by the Korea Publication Industry Promotion Agency. The book describes the

efforts of so many people taken to protect the special environment of Yubu Island, which is a beautiful location where migrating birds come to rest. In the second half of last year, *Goggle-eyed Gobies That Won Against AI Muddybots* received the same recognition for its content on ecology and the environment. This second book had also been the recipient of a competition award given by the National Institute of Ecology.

Aside from these, many other books from the institute have received accolades since our publishing business began in 2015, with the total count standing at 13.

**Lastly, do tell us about any goals or plans the institute has in store for its publishing business.**

From young children to adults, from amateurs who are just curious about ecology to experts, we plan to accommodate everyone and expand our differentiated services with digital content combined with new media technology like ecology-related fairy tales, books for academia, audiobooks and multimedia books. Also, we plan to promote our books continuously to export more of them overseas. This way, we'll be able to strengthen our recognition and also prove the excellence of our books.

Meanwhile, we are also working on making more public content for the disabled like video materials with sign language for the hearing impaired and braille books for the visually challenged. The institute wishes to be at the forefront when it comes to realizing such social

values. Through these efforts, the institute, as the backbone of the country's ecology-related activities, plans to spread ecology culture throughout South Korea and elsewhere through helping the public realize the importance of ecology and boost their knowledge of the subject.



BOOK TRIP

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## Hongdae, a neighborhood with a free and unique culture

Written by Jeon Hye-young

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When one hears the word 'Hongdae', they immediately think of the area's image, rather than the physical location. Hongdae is hard to put into just one word thanks to its unique and diverse culture. It's a location where new culture is made by people who turn away

from the mundane and routine. This is why Hongdae is a good location to try out something new that hasn't existed previously.

Hongdae is one of Seoul's key spots for young people. Hongdae's vibe and culture attract young people who are always looking for something new, and those young people, in turn, create Hongdae's image. There are bookstores in this unique area as well, tucked next to other unique shops, and this book trip is all about the bookstores in Hongdae, one of the top locations for tourists in Seoul.

### **Gyeonguiseon Book Alley**

The word 'Hongdae' was first used to refer to the immediate area in front of Hongik University located in Sangsu-dong, Mapo-gu. Now, the area has sprawled out to include all of Hapjeong Station, Sangsu Station and Yeonnam-dong. Today's book trip starts in Gyeonguiseon Book Alley, located in Donggyo-dong.

An unused train track was turned into the Gyeonguiseon Line Forest Park, and that is where the Gyeonguiseon Book Alley lives. The book alley was opened in October 2016 and spans 250 meters from Hongik University Station to Wau Bridge. Because of its close proximity to the subway station, it can be found quite easily. The book alley can be accessed directly from exit no. 6 of the station for those riding the Gyeongui Jungang Line or Airport Express. For those using line no. 2, exit no. 4 is also an option.



The path to the Gyeonguiseon Line Forest Park and the entrance of the Gyeonguiseon Book Alley from Hongik Univ. Station Exit No. 4

After emerging from exit no. 4 from Hongik Univ. Station and passing through a piloti walkway through a giant shopping mall, one can see the sky overhead and a small park. A few more steps inform the traveler this is where the Gyeonguiseon Book Alley begins, and there is a notice board where information on ongoing programs exists. A two-story building in front of the subway station's exit no. 6 has a networking area for meet and greets with authors and educational programs as well as an office for management. On the first floor are guide maps that are free to use. With one of the guide maps in hand, walking down the path reveals booths that look like train cars. These booths all have different themes, with one holding participation programs and another operated by a publisher. They have been met with great public delight thanks to their many events and programs. This summer, the booths have all been undergoing a makeover and are expected to be worth checking out as operating publishers, themes and programs will be changing.

<Gyeonguiseon Book Alley>

<http://gbookst.or.kr>

50-4 Wausan-ro 35-gil, Mapo-gu, Seoul





Exit no. 6 of Hongik Univ. Stations and train tracks under the Wau Bridge, where the Gyeonguseon Book Alley ends

The book alley ends quite quickly in front of Wau Bridge while one is looking about. In front of the bridge sit independent bookstores 'DEMETER &' and 'Chaegbangyeonhui'.

'Demeter &' started as Demeter Books in Yeonhui-dong and later operated out of one of the booths on the book alley before moving to its current location. As it moved, it changed its name to Demeter &. The bookstore is operated by three sisters and sells books focusing on literature, philosophy and art. What warms the heart is the owners' philosophy, which is to share a more plentiful lifestyle with others by preparing high-quality books for better lives. If one asks what their favorite subject or author is, they provide recommendations. For *K-Book Trends* authors, the owners recommended *Bare Feet* (Changbi) by poet Moon Tae-jun and *Is There an End to What I Love* (Munhakdongne). Moon's poems are known for their Korean characteristics, and the countryside scenes are at times friendly and other times comical. Reading Moon's poems takes one back to their childhood, relaxing and purifying the heart. They also recommended works by Buddhist monk Bopjong. All the books published before his death are now out of print, but last year a collection of unpublished manuscripts was released *I Am*

*Going, See* (Gimyongsu), which may be a good substitution for his other books.

<Demeter &>

<https://www.instagram.com/demeterbooks>

#301, 3rd FL, 161 Wausan-ro, Mapo-gu, Seoul



*Bare Feet, Is There an End to What I Love, I Am Going, See*



An interior shot of DEMETER & and 'secret book',  
a package containing recommended books for sale

Chaegbangyeonhui also started its history in Yeonhui-dong but also moved to where the Gyeonguseon Book Alley is now. The bookstore calls itself one for city residents as it sells books on all activities and culture that are related to the city and its values. A yellow light warms the store as soon as you step inside, and books lie with sticky notes on top, where the store owner has written down personal recommendations. The bookstore sells many independent publications as well, and the owner has said there are hopes the store will later become a location for independent content creators. The bookstore already hosts exhibits for photographs, paintings and also hosts events like book talks.

<Chaegbangyeonhui>

<http://www.facebook.com/chaegbangyeonhui>

B1F, 3 Wausan-ro 35-gil, Mapo-gu



Inside Chaegbangyeonhui and books on display



## The identity of this bookstore

In the 1980s as Hongik University began specializing in art education, the street in front of the university became crowded with art-related academies, bookstores, workshops and galleries as well as art workrooms. At this time, a 'workroom culture' emerged that was unique to the area, and this was said to have become the backbone of the cultural areas that have comprehensive personalities in Hongdae today. Perhaps it is because of this that the Hongdae region has many independent bookstores. It is difficult for one to judge whether the locations are bookstores, cafes or multi-concept stores. There are bookstores that are difficult to define and being run with different values and characteristics. These independent bookstores are usually located in the fringe areas of Hongdae, and these following bookstores were located behind exit no. 1 of Hongik Univ. Station.

The first bookstore we visited was called '1984'. The simple but eye-catching logo '1984' also has the slogan 'the book is the root and culture the result of it' beneath it. The store is being run by a publishing company of the same name, and while it is a cafe, a bookstore and multi-concept shop, they have refused to define themselves as one word and rather refer to the store as a cultural space. It is a location being operated by a publisher, but the books being sold inside are from other publishers too. When we asked what kind of books would be good for presents, the store recommended poet Yun Dong-ju's *Sky, Wind and Stars* from

Hyewon Publishing Co and Kim So-wol's *Azalea*. These copies were designed by graphic designer Lee Jae-min, who took the motif from the original versions of the poems. Regardless of age, the poems would be a good present, the store recommended.

<1984>

<http://www.re1984.com>

194 Donggyo-ro, Mapo-gu, Seoul



*Sky, Wind and Stars, Azalea*



The interior and exterior of '1984'

The street in front of '1984' is quite empty compared to the main street where the subway station is. Another block inside the alley makes one think they have stepped into a residential area, but this is where another cultural location like '1984' is, called 'Gongsangondo'.

Once you open the door and step inside, a very 'Hongdae-esque' view greets you. Made for indie-culture, this store is usually run as a cafe but also used for cultural purposes like exhibits, performances and art markets. Befitting a store that exists for indie-culture, most of the books for sale here are independent publications. As smaller-scale publishing has become available, more writers are publishing their own work rather than going through a publisher. And many of these writers are seeking out 'Gongsangondo' with their books, the store says. Books by famous authors or the usual bestsellers at large-scale bookstores can't be found here, but unique books are selected by readers who appreciate that uniqueness and purchased. The store offers fun for those seeking their own personal treasure in books.

<Gongsangondo>

<http://www.gongsangondo.com>

40, Donggyo-ro 23-gil, Mapo-gu, Seoul



Books for sale at Gongsangondo and photographs of the store

## The value of books, the happiness books give

Now we turn towards Hapjeong Station. When you think 'Hongdae' you can't leave out the keyword 'art' and near exit no. 7 of Hapjeong Station is a bookstore specializing in art-related books called 'B Platform'. Inside the store, all sorts of books on art and picture books clamor for attention. "Is this really a book?" one asks after seeing a very interesting looking book. So many pretty picture books are on display, enough to make picture book addicts go wild. After looking at the books for quite some time, one notices the other spaces towards the back of the store. A gallery-type space for exhibits is available while a studio also exists for workshops. 'B Platform' was also very Hongdae-like. Inside the studio was the store's manager and we asked for a picture book recommendation for *K-Book Trends* readers only to hear the manager lament there

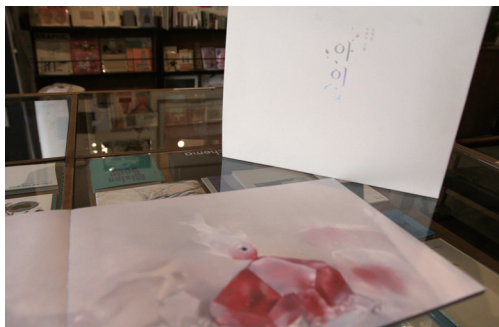


were so many they wanted to recommend. In the end, they selected two - Byun Ye-seul's *Child* and Kim Min-hee's *The Animals On My Fingertips*. *Child* is a picture book that has no text featuring the story of a fish seeking out its own light with beautiful art. *The Animals On My Fingertips* is the English version of the author's book in Braille that tells the story of wild animals in the dark. We were told that these two books and other books in the store were difficult to find in other stores. Longer descriptions of these books and others can be found on 'B Platform's' blog.

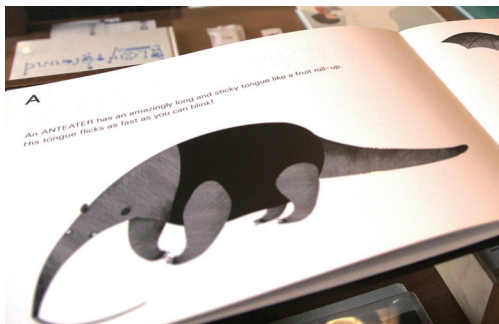
<B Platform>

<https://blog.naver.com/b-platform>

3rd Fl., 22 Dokmak-ro 2-gil, Mapo-gu, Seoul



*Child*



*The animals on my fingertips*



Within 'B-Platform'



Art books that break conventions about the form of books are sold at 'B Platform'

When one is inside bookstores, time flies like an arrow. After looking at the books and things on display at 'B Platform', the final destination of the day awaits the traveler. The last store is located between Hapjeong Station and Sangsu Station. It is 'Thanks Books', a name that instantly comes to mind when one thinks of Hongdae and bookstores.

'Thanks Books' opened in March 2011 and it is currently in its 8th year as one of Hongdae's most representative curated bookstores. At first, it was located closer to the main Hongdae street, but it moved to its current location early last year. Even when the term 'independent bookstore' hadn't yet caught on, 'Thanks Books' was already famous among bookworms. This was because the store

selects and sells books that are tailored to the taste of people who seek out Hongdae, which cannot be defined in one word. The store says it would like to be a special meeting place for all those who love the area in front of Hongik University and hopes for all those who visit the store to find a little bit of happiness in their everyday lives through a coincidental meeting with a book. The book of the week that is selected by the curator and the store's special line up of books can be found on its website. One of the good things about 'Thanks Books' is that they have eight years' worth of book recommendations in their records, so one can rifle through older publications in addition to the newer ones.

<Thanks Books>

<http://www.thanksbooks.com>

57-6, Yanghwa-ro 6-gil, Mapo-gu, Seoul



Interior and exterior images of Thanks Books

Not only can these independent bookstores or curation bookstores be found in the Hongdae area, but also other locations as well. However, what makes the independent bookstores in the Hongdae area more special is that these bookstores were here even before the term 'independent bookstore' was common. And although many bookstores and book cafes come and go, Hongdae sees more of them appearing, each one more unique than the last.



KOREAN PUBLISHERS

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Genre Novel Publisher  
'Arzak Livres'

Arranged by Choi Ha-Yeong

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Arzak Livres is a South Korean publisher that plans, discovers and translates good genre novels. Arzak aims to act as a beacon for readers in South Korea who love genre novels and to show them the publisher's vision for genre novels. With that in mind, Arzak has been consistently publishing genre novels until today, saying it believes in the value of science fiction novels as a 'literature of subversion'. The below is a Q&A with Arzak, where the publisher discussed its vision, future publications and representative books.

Hello, we are happy to introduce Arzak Livres through *K-Book Trends*. We're aware Arzak is a publisher that focuses on science fiction. Could you introduce Arzak to our readers?

Arzak's motto is "Have beautiful dreams and spread science everywhere". After the publication of our first book *Little Brother* in September 2015, we have published some-70 science fiction novels from both South Korea and abroad over the past four years and established ourselves as a science fiction focused publisher. Like the main characteristic of literature which is to aggressively deny irrational realities, we firmly believe in the value of science fiction as a 'literature of subversion' that tirelessly seeks out the most scientific and rational alternatives.



*Little Brother*

Arzak seems like a unique name that makes one think of the Korean adverb 'ajak', which refers to the sound one makes when biting into something firm or breaking it. Is there a special meaning in the name?

It has two meanings. One refers to the adverb you mentioned; the sound one makes when biting into something firm or breaking it. Our company name means to be firm and never break, and challenge the irrational reality. Arzak the English word we got from Jean Giraud Moebius' biggest work of art and its main character's name 'Arzak'. Moebius was one of France's most renowned artists and animation artists, and he even worked on science fiction movies like "The Fifth Element" as a concept designer. In the comic, Arzak speaks no words but plays music all over the world on a dragon to resolve irrational conflict he sees along the way. He loves books too.

When one thinks of genre literature, one can easily fall into the mistake of thinking those books are for people already interested in the subject. We feel more books are attempting to attract a wider range of readers. What kind of efforts does Arzak believe publishers should take to help readers open their minds?

We say this very carefully as we only have four years of experience as a publisher, but we are trying very hard not to be emotional about the performance of every single book we publish. I'm sure all other publishers are the same, but more and more good books



from us will eventually create the Arzak brand, and because we've already seen the number of readers who trust us grow over the past four years, we are sure in our mission that we will try not to disappoint our readers.

Arzak's first book *Little Brother* became the center of attention after it was mentioned during an anti-terrorist act filibuster in 2016. And you said you've published more than 70 books since then. We're curious to know what some of your other representative books might be.

Our *Inherit the Stars* by James P. Hogan, who is acclaimed for having inspired so many Japanese animation works like 'Mobile Suit Zeta Gundam' and 'Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water', was quite popular. Books by Connie Willis, a key science fiction writer in the English-speaking world, have also seen steady demand. Her time travel series like *Fire Watch*, *Doomsday Book*, *To Say Nothing of the Dog* and *Blackout/All Clear* have been published through us. In terms of more recent publications, we would have Ann Leckie's Imperial Radch trilogy *Ancillary Justice*, *Ancillary Sword* and *Ancillary Mercy* and Mur Lafferty's *Six Wakes*. We have also featured South Korean authors like Kim Bo-young, who recently signed a copyright export deal with Harper Collins in the United States for *The Prophet for This World. Can Be Taken Back* by contributing author Moon Mok-ha has also become one of our bestsellers through word of mouth.



*Inherit the Stars, The Prophet for This World, Can Be Taken Back*

We heard you have good news regarding author Moon Mok-ha, who is still a budding author. Moon's video adaptation rights for *Can Be Taken Back* were bought by a Hollywood producer. I think this shows South Korean genre novel content has competitiveness even outside South Korea. When compared to genre novels overseas, what do you think are the strengths of South Korean genre novels?

We think the reason will be quite similar to the competitive edge K-pop groups have around the world, but simply put, the science fiction work of South Korean authors is young, charismatic and cool. We republished this work last year, but South Korea's very first science fiction novel *Complete Society* was written in 1965. Because the existence of science fiction in South Korea was broken then for another several decades, the 'oldest' science fiction writer we have in South Korea is still in their 50s. However, the work we are seeing from our young authors is up there in quality with some of the non-Korean science fiction writers we translate and publish.

Rather, the young South Korean authors have been able to show off their charisma subversively. They are not troubled by power that pressures their back, and we are certain young South Korean authors will someday receive more attention than anyone else because they are able to accept the diversity of culture.

**What are some South Korean science-fiction novels you'd like to recommend to our readers at *K-Book Trends*?**

This is something we do for our readers at home, but we have been continuously producing an introduction series of South Korean science fiction authors to promote them outside the country as well. We have published six in the series so far: Kim Chang-gyu's *Samsara*, Chang Gang-myung's *A Very Private Superpower*, Jeong Bo-ra's *Curse Rabbit*, dcde's *The Gummy Bear Murder Case*, Gwak Jae-sik's *The World's Biggest Bet* and Lee San-hwa's *A Proven Fact*. We plan to continue introducing new works by South Korea's representative science fiction writers, and Arzak is certain the day will come when we will be able to offer foreign readers a collection of high-quality short stories by unique South Korean writers.



From left above: *Samsara*, *A Very Private Superpower*, *Curse Rabbit*,  
*The Gummy Bear Murder Case*, *The World's Biggest Bet* and *A Proven Fact*

### Could you tell us about any books you have planned?

For our translated work, we are preparing a completed work of all 54 of Robert A. Heinlein's short stories. This would be unprecedented globally, as his short stories have only been partially published in collected form. The Heinlein Foundation was delighted to hear of our plan, and we think this work will be monumental. We are also working on a short story collection by Jeong Se-rang, a South Korean author who recently signed a contract with Netflix for a drama series, called *One Eleventh* (working title). Also, we're

preparing long-form novels by South Korean writers who have published short story collections so far, like Kim Chang-gyu, Gwak Jae-sik and dcdc.

**Our hopes are high for the path Arzak is taking as a science-fiction focused publisher. What is your plan and vision for Arzak when it comes to future books?**

As we mentioned before, like our motto "Have beautiful dreams and spread science everywhere" we aim to keep the main characteristic that science fiction has, which is to be a literature of subversion. We hope to introduce high quality South Korean works of science-fiction as our authors are loyal yet more charismatic and cooler than authors in any other countries. We have also been expanding our expertise to science mystery books since last year that involve science fiction or carry elements we feel will attract science-fiction readers. This was a decision made by us solely, but it was also a change we felt had to be made as more books that are bound to one specific genre are being published in South Korea and elsewhere. So, one day perhaps, Arzak may be able to subversively change its identity as a science fiction focused publishing company.

## KOREAN AUTHORS

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### Author Lee Yong-han

**A traveler seeking cats amid a sense of loss**

Arranged by Choi Hyo-jun

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Lee Yong-han is a poet who is comforted by cats and feels happiness through the feline creatures. Starting with his book *Hello, The Cat Was Thankful* (Bookfolio, 2009) in order to present street cats in a friendly light, Lee has gone on to publish more books about cats he has met during his travels and everyday life, like *Be Bright, Cat* (Bookfolio, 2011) and *Travel, Love and Cat* (Bookfolio, 2014). The author's books have gained him the nickname 'cat writer', and Lee says another stage of his career has opened with *Humans Are Busy So Leave it to the Cats* (Yedam, 2015). The book is about his father in law who ended up living with 16 cats after having disliked them in the past. Lee is also a poet, and his first book was a collection of poetry. However, more readers know of him as the 'cat writer', showing how popular his cat books have been. Lee says he started



writing poems because he felt a sense of loss. Then what compelled him to start writing about cats? Lee has penned more than a dozen books on cats, and now his kitty content can be seen in his poetry. The following is his story.



Everyone calls you the 'cat writer', even yourself. There's no way we can't talk about cats, but it's likely you didn't expect to become popular through cat books when you started writing. How did you start writing books on cats?

Hello, I'm Lee Yong-han. I'm working as a writer of cat books and also as a poet, albeit somewhat lazily. Some time ago, I was also a traveler for roughly a decade, but now my life has very little of that. At first, I didn't really think about writing books about cats. I started uploading photos of cats on my blog like a hobby, but after



a year or so, I began receiving publication offers from publishers here and there. Among these, I felt one publisher could be trusted because they loved cats and things went on from there. I didn't start with some grand mission in mind, to deliver a great message to readers. I wanted to show readers that cats are beings that feel emotions just like us, that they're living creatures that have beating hearts just like us. I wished to tell readers that everyone has cat neighbors nearby.

My first book on cats was released about a decade ago. Back then, there was only one book on the market on street cats, basically showing the lack of interest the public had in stray cats prior to that book. Public interest in stray cats started picking around then, and I think my book received much attention because readers who are interested in cats felt the book shared an understanding with them.

*Hello, The Cat Was Thankful* was exported to Japan, Taiwan and China. What was the response like in those countries?

There is no surefire way to analyze the reader response in countries where my books have been translated aside from sales numbers. In all three countries, the book wasn't published beyond the first edition, so I guess you could say the response wasn't that great. Still, after that first book was published in Taiwan, *Travel, Love and Cat* and *Humans Are Busy So Leave it to the Cats* were both released there under the same publisher.

Also, one reader in Japan visited South Korea for the screening of

“Cat Dance”, a documentary based on *Hello, The Cat Was Thankful*. That same reader came to my first photo exhibition two years ago and even purchased one of my works. I was very thankful.



*Hello, The Cat Was Thankful, Travel, Love and Cat, Humans Are Busy So Leave it to the Cats*

Aside from your nickname 'cat writer' you are also a poet and a traveler. Which title for yourself are you most fond of?

I think apart from whether I'm fond of it or not, I am called a cat writer because I love cats and most of my work involves cats, so people have naturally come to call me that. I have published three poetry collections so far, but I am known as cat writer Lee Yong-han rather than poet Lee Yong-han. I guess perhaps you could say that's unfortunate, but at the same time, I do feel some pressure when people call me a poet. Back when I was traveling, I preferred to be called a traveler. I feel least stressed being called a cat writer, as now I'm usually working on my cat books.

You've previously mentioned you stepped into the world of cats after seeing a mother cat sleeping with her five kittens on an abandoned sofa in front of someone's house. Could you tell us about other scenes that compelled you to become a poet and a traveler?

My hometown is now under a lake created by a dam. I still remember seeing my hometown grow far from sight through a cloud of dust as we were moving our entire belongings in a truck as if we were fleeing from something. That sense of loss and loneliness, I believe, pushed me to start writing. I started writing poetry when I was in 8th grade. I think it was rather out of a sense of losing the source of my self rather than losing my hometown. My writing poetry was an inner battle I fought in order to find what I had lost.

Traveling began in a similar way for me. I traveled the world in search of what I had lost. The countryside, the woods, far off places, abandoned places - I went to all of these and published my first book on travel called *In Search of Disappearing Outback Villages* (Silcheon, 1998). This book, I feel, was a record of my travels in search of my lost hometown. The truth is, however, I never found anything during my travels that I felt I'd lost. They're honestly not things that can be found through travel. My writing poetry is also part of that journey of seeking, but I don't think I've found anything through that either.

To sum up, I didn't find anything in my travels, and it was all in vain, but in my current life, without traveling, I now feel I am on a


different kind of trip. I go out to meet new cats, take photographs and observe how cats live their lives. Stepping into a strange alley, meeting new cats and realizing what previously felt far away was actually nearby are whole different adventures on their own.

Late last year, you published your third poetry collection called *Nap at Day, Walk at Night* (Munhakdongne, 2018). It took you more than ten years to publish this collection after your last work of poetry. How do you feel?

My third book of poems was delayed because of my laziness and fear. Despite the fact that the publication was delayed, I still feel that it's lacking somewhat. I also feel some self-blame. Writing poetry gets harder and harder, the more you write. I want to write poetry easily but have found that a difficult goal. For some poems, I held onto them for months on end, only to feel they were not a big deal after they had been written. And other times, the flow is broken when I have to finish other books or another project I'm working on. When I go back to finish a particular poem, the emotions I had initially are gone, and at times, I have to admit I ignored my poetry with the excuse that I had to make a living.

I made many excuses to myself for not writing poetry: my livelihood, time and even my age. I found excuses for my laziness in so many things, and that caused so much time to pass. I also blame myself for having thought of poetry in too serious a manner. I realize I need to relax a bit, but that is easier said than done. While

living as the cat writer, I was only able to write poems when I had bits and scraps of time. Regret from dissatisfaction with myself is bigger than happiness that the book is finally out. I think this all comes from that sense of loss I still carry within myself, which I feel is holding back my competence.

The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is a solid, muted yellow-green color. At the top, there is a small block of text in Korean. The text reads: '문학동네시인선 115 이용한 시' on the first line and '집 낮에는 낮잠 밤에는 산책' on the second line. The text is in a simple, black, sans-serif font.

문학동네시인선 115 이용한 시  
집 낮에는 낮잠 밤에는 산책

*Nap at Day, Walk at Night*

You mentioned that writing poetry can be difficult. It can be tough reading poetry for readers too! Do you have any tips for readers on how they can read your latest publication better?

While I was working on my latest book of poems, I tried to bring together words that usually don't go well together at all. So, from a reader's point of view, I think I can understand why they might find it hard to comprehend why some particular words were used. Some may feel this strange mismatch may take away from the experience of reading the poems. Rather than taking apart the sentences, putting them back together and delving within the meanings of

the words, it's most likely better to just feel the flow of the entire poem like its ambience or the general feeling of things. This way of reading poetry will probably help with other works of poetry and not just mine.

In your latest book, you describe the life of mankind as something very exhausting while drawing out sympathy from others. The lives of cats can be seen in the same light, but in your poetry, they are described in a merrier fashion than the lives of humans. Was that your way of trying to tell human readers that there is something to learn from cats in order to become less tired and happier?

I believe I wrote this once in a book, but I think cats have a particular way of trying their best to live in a carefree manner. Rather than drown in past self-pity and self-blame only to torture themselves, cats are very much in the present. Humans are overly fixated on the past and worry about the future that has yet to come. And we deplete so much emotional energy in our present reality because of these things when we don't have to.

Your latest poetry collection brings together your characteristics as a poet, traveler and cat writer. Mongolia and Tibet are mentioned quite frequently in some of your poems. Are there any travel locations that stand out in your mind?

The country that was most memorable for me and the one that pushed me to think was Tibet. During my stay there, I met a monk

who had embarked on a one-year ascetic practice, walking from Yunnan to Lhasa while bowing. I wondered why he was going to these lengths while destroying his body, but he told me that his journey to Lhasa showed his life was being led by his will. Upon hearing those words, I realized so many aspects of my life were being dragged around by numerous things like money, my lifestyle, family and time. I felt I too, wanted to lead my life in a more direct manner. It wasn't that my life was radically changed after this visit, but I now carry that feeling within me all the time, that my life is decided by me and that only I lead it.

When you hear the word 'Tibet', you think of words like 'mecca for the soul'. While I was in Tibet, I got that feeling the entire time wherever I went or whomever I met. What I remember most are the Himalayan apricots. At one point in my journey, I felt so hot and tired and was overall in bad condition because the food I had eaten had been too greasy, like yak meat. Craving something tangy, I tried an apricot, and it was spectacular. It was the best apricot I had ever had, and now whenever someone mentions Tibet, I think of that time before anything else.

Lastly, are there any books by other authors you'd like to introduce to our *K-Book Trends* readers?

First, I'd like to recommend poet Park Jun's *I Ate For Several Days With Your Name* (Munhakdongne, 2012). I can't speak for anyone else, but it really spoke to me. I could see glimmers of what I'd



lost and the sense of loss that exists inside me through the poems. I think Park is quite good at creating very unfamiliar sentences with very familiar words. Next, I recommend Paper Umbrella's *The Happy Stray Cat* (Bookfolio, 2010). It's a book that shows cats' actions, expressions and their characteristics overall with photographs that are quite happy and joyful. I dare say readers who can't read Korean will also be able to enjoy it.

## Publishing Industry

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# South Korea's Global Book Exports

**Books exported to the U.K., the U.S. and other parts of Europe**

Written by Joseph Lee (President of KL Management)

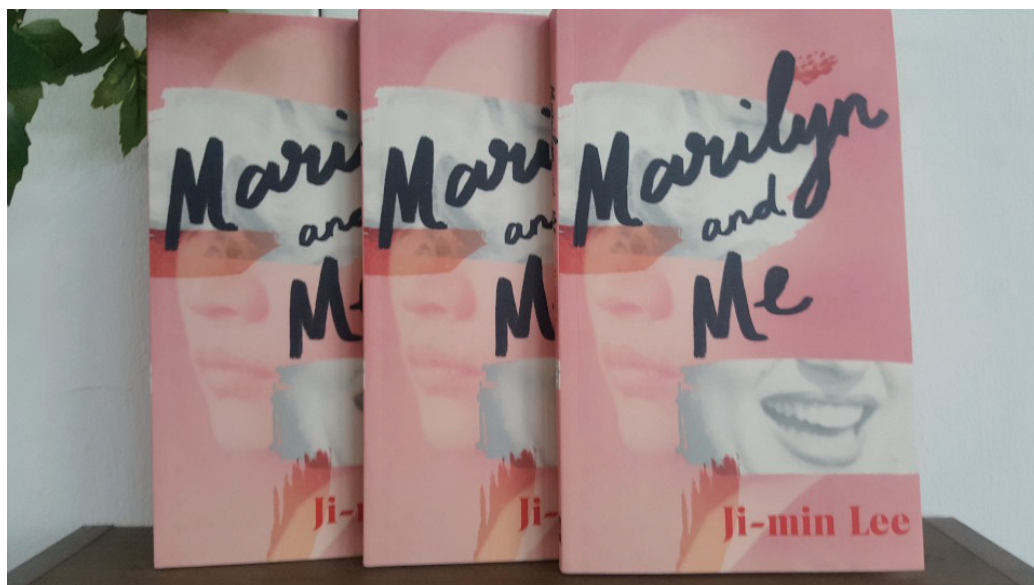
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Several High quality South Korean books have recently been translated into a variety of languages and have been warmly received around the world. What is it then, about these South Korean books that enticed global readers? The answers are below as we take a look at recent South Korean book exports and the response regarding those books from publishing markets in the U.K., the U.S. and other parts of Europe.

**Lee Ji-min's *Marilyn and Me*,  
a portrait of wounds and healing from the Korean War**

The author of books like *Modern Boy* (Munhakdongne) and *A Love Virus* (Jamobook), Lee Ji-min saw her book *Marilyn and Me* (That

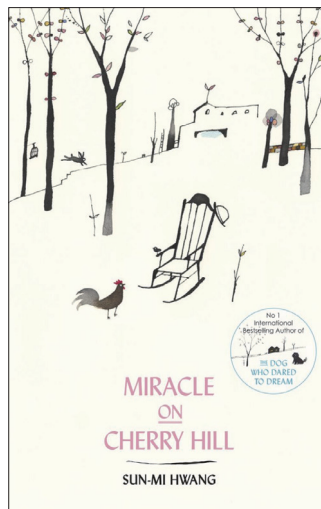
Book) translated and published in the United Kingdom on July 11. The English version of the book was published by 4th Estate, a publisher there. The same publication will be released in the United States by publisher Harper in September under a different title, *The Starlet and the Spy*. To drive its plot forward, the book uses an actual 4-day visit to South Korea by Marilyn Munroe decades ago and tells the story of a fictional woman named Alice who acted as an interpreter for the movie star. The novel tells the story of the Korean War through Alice, and depicts the wounds inflicted by the war and subsequent healing. Heather Morris, author of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*, said, "This story of the unlikely meeting of two vulnerable women is a beautifully woven page-turner. The battle-weary woman and the pin-up girl who meet, connect, separate: each changed by the brief union". "This short and haunting novel gives the reader an insight into a war that's largely been forgotten...This is a dark, impactful story of bleak survival, brilliantly translated from Korean, with raw and shocking images that tend to linger...a bone-chilling read," said U.K.-based *Irish Independent*. Following the releases in the U.K. and the U.S., *Marilyn and Me* is scheduled to be published in Germany and Italy.



Cover art for the U.K. version of Lee Ji-min's *Marilyn and Me*

### Hwang Sun-mi's *Miracle on Cherry Hill* Captivates U.K. Readers

Global bestselling author Hwang Sun-mi has returned with her latest publication, *Miracle on Cherry Hill*. On the heels of *The Hen Who Dreamed She Could Fly* (Sakyejul) and *The Dog Who Dared to Dream* (Woongjin Thinkbig), this latest book was released in the U.K. on July 4 through Little, Brown. This is a heartwarming new novel about renewal and friendship. It is also a story of a man named Kang Dae-su. His whole life is a miracle, rising from poverty to running a successful construction company. In his twilight years, Kang is diagnosed with a brain tumor. He returns to his childhood home of Cherry Hill. Is it owned by the construction company who is trying to rejuvenate the neighborhood? Or does it belong to the residents who have used the land to play, think, walk, love and explore for generations? *Miracle on Cherry Hill* is a redemptive story of a damaged man regaining his trust in humanity. It explores the fragility of nature and human lives.



Cover art for the U.K. version of Hwang Sun-mi's *Miracle on Cherry Hill*

## Beloved by readers around the world, Shin Kyung-sook's *The Court Dancer*

Acclaimed for novels like *Please Look After Mom* (Changbi) and *I'll Be Right There* (Munhakdongne), Shin Kyung-sook recently released her third novel in Italy titled *The Court Dancer*. Last August, around the time when the novel was published in the United States, the *Washington Post* said in a review, "Inspired by the true story of a late-19th-century court dancer, Shin's novel explores themes of exoticism, assimilation and identity. By placing Korean history beside a Western narrative, Shin highlights the disparity between Europe and the more isolated Asian nation. At its core, *The Court Dancer* examines what countries lose in identity in exchange for technological advancement." "A fascinating and lyrical portrayal of a woman and a country at the crossroads of history," said Historical Novels Review of Shin's novel. "Beautifully

and evocatively written, the moving and ultimately tragic story of Yi Jin's life resonates like the melodic sound of the Korean flute and lingers hauntingly in your mind. Highly recommended," it went on. The novel has continuously been receiving reviews around the globe ever since it was published. *The Court Dancer* has been translated and published in other countries aside from Italy and the United States, like France, Finland, Romania, Egypt and China.



Cover art for the Italian and Finnish versions of Shin Kyung-sook's *The Court Dancer*

### Kwon Jeong-hyun's *Knife and Tongue*, the artful pinnacle of East Asian imagination

The recipient of the seventh Honbul Literary Prize in 2017, Kwon Jeong-hyun's *Knife and Tongue* (Dasanchaekbang) was published in France by Les Editions Philippe Picquier. The novel takes place in Manchuria in 1945, just before the doom of the Japanese colonial empire then. Three characters narrate the novel: Japanese



army commander Mori who is afraid of war, the Chinese chef named Chen who is trying to assassinate him, and a Korean woman named Kilsun. South Korean reviewers have said the novel is a bold and provocative novel that has taken East Asian imagination to another level. The narrators Chen, Mori and Kilsun live lives that are attached to knives and tongues. Nations fight against each other with knives and tongues, but they also understand and pacify each other with knives and tongues through food that brings up special memories. *Knife and Tongue* has so far been exported to just France, but hopes are high this will be an opportunity for Kwon's literary world to expand to other countries.



Cover art for the French version of Kwon Jeong-hyun's *Knife and Tongue*

## Publishing Policy I

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# South Korea's Standard Publishing Contracts and Adaptation Rights

Written by Jung, Goo Sung (Legal & Monitoring Team, Sai Copyright Agency)

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## The establishment of standard contracts by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

Following the 'Cloud Bread Incident'<sup>1)</sup> of 2014, authorities in South Korea began mulling over fundamental issues regarding the working conditions of South Korean content creators. After this incident, the culture ministry created and distributed seven standard contracts for publishing after discussions with rights holders and publishers. The author of this piece, a member of the Korean Society of Authors, was also invited to offer opinions as part of the legislation taskforce for the standard contracts.

The seven contracts from the culture ministry were per the following: right of publication, right of monopolistic publication,

book publishing rights, exclusive publishing rights, publication rights and exclusive settings, transfer of intellectual property, and permission of work usage (use for outside Korea). Of these, the two most often used are the contracts for transferring intellectual rights<sup>2)</sup> and book publishing<sup>3)</sup> and the following will address these two.

First, intellectual property transfer contracts must clearly state what will be transferred and for how long to reduce the fallout from contracts<sup>4)</sup> that do not provide the original proprietors with payouts even in the case of additional profit by publishers. The contract states the right of share for the intellectual property rights (right of reproduction, right of public performance, right of public transmission) for optional right transfer. The proprietor can also choose whether or not they will transfer adaptation rights as well. All time periods for right transfers are stated so after the contract expires, the artists or authors will have their rights transferred back to them.

There were many opinions shared when the book publishing contract was being drafted. The contract now states the original author holds all the rights regarding adaptations and that they can entrust responsibilities like levying charges to other parties, including publishing companies. An amendment was made to include a one-time automatic contract extension.

At the time when the contracts were established, hopes were

high that many publishing companies would use the standard contracts as they were made, after all, via discussions between the right holders and publishers. However, one can easily find today that there are more publishers that use either their own contracts or those created by other third parties than the contracts provided by the government. This is because the contracts are recommendations, meaning there are no legal repercussions even if they are not used. Hence, no one is obligated to use these contracts. During the drafting process, some said the usage of the contracts should be lawfully enforced but eventually, whether the contracts would be used or not would be left to markets.

### **Standard publishing contracts in the publishing industry**

Currently, the two most influential publishing associations in South Korea's publishing industry, the Korean Publishers Association and Korea Publishers Society, provide both the government's standard publishing contract and their respective standard contracts on their websites. Below are articles regarding adaptation rights from the individual standard contracts created by each of the associations.

According to these publication contracts, the publishers are subject to receiving rights such as the right to use publications for adaptations and the right to receive compensation, which is typically the right of the proprietor per publishing law. Realistically, it is difficult for individuals to respond to every single adaptation

effort or republications after signing a setting contract for publishing rights, so for some, it may seem reasonable to hand over such rights to publishers as it states in the above articles. However, there are opinions calling for the amendment of these clauses to better respect the wishes of writers should there be republications or adaptations in the works.

Korean Publishers Association <sup>5)</sup>	<p><b>Article 20 (Usage of adaptations)</b> 1. During the contract period, if the original work is adapted in ways including translations, remakes, digests, plays, movies, broadcasts, audio/video recordings or leases, the proprietor will entrust all related issues to the publisher. However, if there is a separate special clause under an additional stipulation, that will be respected. Also, under Article 21 for secondary revenue ratios, items for which the proprietor's revenue rate is 100 percent will be considered as not granted to the publisher.</p> <p>2. Regardless of all the Articles, should necessities arise for the publisher, decisions can be made following negotiations with the proprietor.</p>
Korea Publishers Society <sup>6)</sup>	<p><b>Article 7 (Adaptations)</b> 1. During the contract period, if the original work is used for adaptations including re-inclusions, translations, remakes, comics, plays, movies, animations, broadcasts, audio/video recordings, edits, Article 25 of the Copyright Law (Use for Purpose of School education) and Article 31 of the Copyright Law (Reproductions, etc in Libraries, etc) or other uses, related tasks will be delegated to the publisher by the proprietor, and conditions of the permitted usage must be decided upon after consultation with the proprietor.</p> <p>2. Profits from adaptations will be divided between the proprietor and publisher by _____ each.</p> <p>3. Should translations of the original work be sold overseas, profits from the translation will be divided between the proprietor and publisher by _____ each. However, following the signing of this agreement should the proprietor wish to transfer the exclusive execution of the overseas translation rights contract to a third party like a publishing agency, the proprietor must receive the publisher's agreement, and the distribution of royalties must be negotiated between the proprietor and the publisher.</p> <p>4. Regarding the usage of adaptations, examples in Articles 1, 4 and 5 of this contract should be followed.</p>

## Need for strengthened mutual trust

If there are no publishers, then there would be no writers. This is also valid the other way around - if there were no writers, there would be no publishers. Like fish cannot live without water, publishers and writers can be either fish or water to each other. In this symbiotic relationship, both need to have attitudes that respect the other party, and on that same front, clauses in contracts currently being used on the market also need to change to respect both sides. As the standard contract created by the South Korean government is the end result of discussions by both publishers and writers, it needs to be respected by all parties and used widely. This must be so to ensure writers are not taken advantage of and trust between writers and publishers will be strengthened to create a healthier publishing ecosystem.

- 1) An incident where the publisher gained 440 billion won worth of profits from adaptations like animated characters but the original artist received only 18.5 million won due to contractual obligations.
- 2) A contract that states the transfer of copyright from the previous right holder to a new right holder.
- 3) This is a contract that differs from usage permission contracts in the fact that boundaries (duplication, distribution) for publication can be set. It is also different from exclusive setting contracts for the right of public transmission due to the share of rights.
- 4) A contract in which the publisher does not provide payments for additional profits beyond the agreed sum to be paid.
- 5) Website for the Korean Publishers Association: <http://kpa21.or.kr>
- 6) Website for the Korea Publishers Society: <http://www.kopus.org>



## Publishing Policy II

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# South Korea's Fixed Book Price Policy

Written by Won-Keun Baek (Books & Society Research Institute, President)

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Fixed book price policies are rules that set consumer prices for books at levels the publishers select. Countries where these policies exist, sell books at the same price anywhere you go. Instead of competition through prices at the commercial sale level, price competition takes place at the production stage between publishers, boosting the diversity of distribution channels and convenience of readers.

The global publishing market is divided into countries that have fixed book prices and those that do not. English speaking countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, which all form one giant market do not have fixed book prices. Non-English-speaking advanced countries like Germany, France, Spain, the Netherlands and Japan all have fixed book prices.

Those that do have this policy have diverse ways to enforce it. For example, in Germany and France, the governments have passed special laws for fixed book prices that have banned all discounts for physical and electronic books. In France, books ordered online cannot be shipped for free. Meanwhile, Japan enforces fixed book prices for paper books, but it does not for e-books. Spain has a very stringent fixed book price policy, but it has shown flexibility and allows discounts for books sold at book fairs.

South Korea has a fixed book price system that is enforced by law. Among the countries that have fixed book price systems, South Korea has the biggest discount percentage and also allows vendors, etc. to freely negotiate prices amongst themselves. Why this came to be was because the government needed to accommodate both sides of the spectrum: those who strongly pushed for fixed book prices (brick and mortar bookstores) and those who were opposed (online bookstores).

Currently, according to the publishing culture industry promotion law, South Korea has enforced fixed prices on both paper books and e-books. There is no limitation to the category for which the fixed prices are to be used and no term limit. However, magazines are the exception to this rule. Retail bookstores can provide up to a combined 15 percent discounts on books and consumer benefits equal to that amount. Direct price discounts may only be given up to 10 percent of the listed price. So usually, large-scale online bookstores will provide the 10 percent price discount in addition to a 5 percent cashback in mileage points. They use all the legal space

that is available for discounts. However, most small to medium-sized brick and mortar stores cannot afford to give discounts, and they sell books at listed prices. Although South Korea has a fixed book price system in place, from the consumer's point of view, there is a 15 percent price difference from the listed price, hence taking away from the policy's original aim of having one price for every book. This is in contrast with daily newspaper prices (for one copy or subscriptions), which are the same anywhere in the country.

In the process of book sales in South Korea, prices have up to a 15 percent difference depending on whether consumers buy their books at an online store or brick and mortar store because of the book provision rate that is set by publishers (the price at which publishers provide books to wholesalers or large-scale online/offline bookstores compared to listed prices = margin rate for distributors, sellers). Despite the fixed book price policy, book prices can be different depending on the location, turning the law into a 'discount limit law'. Meanwhile, problems continuously arose when online bookstores provided additional discounts through agreements with credit card companies, and eventually, those discounts were capped at 15 percent in 2018 via independent agreements with the private sector. Now, the reality is consumers can buy some books at online stores and receive up to a 30 percent discount if they meet the right standards. Because books and e-books in South Korea are exempt from the value-added tax of 10 percent, there have been voices saying the maximum 30 percent discount rate is neither part of a fixed book price nor free market trade.

The beginning of South Korea's fixed book price policy goes back to 1977 when a group of publishers and bookstores agreed to start selling books at contracted listed prices. The fair-trade law which was enacted in 1980 banned resale price maintenance acts for all products except written work, like books. This aided the dissemination of fixed prices for books nationwide, and the number of bookstores grew. However, in the mid-1990s, the emergence of large-scale shopping malls brought large price discounts and books were no exception. By the late 1990s, online bookstores came onto the scene, started providing steep discounts on books and the existing fixed price policy hit a wall. The policy had, in reality, become useless as there was no law at the time that regulated new book distribution channels which did not enter fixed book price agreements.

South Korea's publishers and bookstores began new efforts for an amendment to the fixed book price policy and succeeded in getting an amendment passed in 2002 that included mandatory fixed book prices. However, despite this effort, books on discount were still available because an article existed under the law that allowed them, thanks to online bookstores and members of the public who strongly opposed fixed book prices. This article stated books were only subject to fixed book prices until one year after publication, and during that one year, only up to a 10 percent discount could be provided. The law also had a sunset clause of five years. The situation grew worse compared to before the law was passed, as online stores would heavily compete with each other

and slash prices of books that had passed one year after the date of publication, providing more than 50 percent in discounts. The law was amended several times after that, and today, the fixed book price policy is where it has been since November 2014.

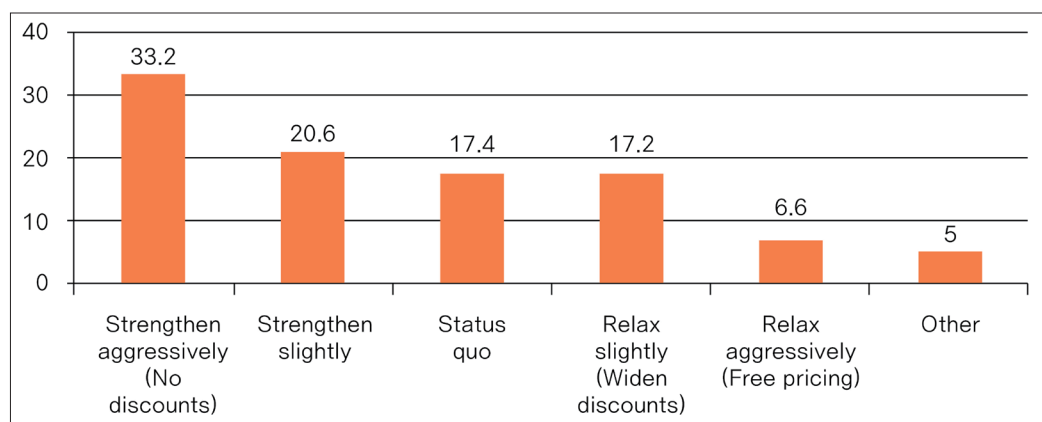
After the current law was enacted, all books were now subject to the same discount caps no matter when they were published. Books to be sold to public institutions and libraries also had to abide by the rule, when previously they were exempt to it. There were many who opposed, including the general public that insisted consumer prices would go up because of the law, but the South Korean parliament eventually agreed a fixed book price policy was needed. It made a compromise, allowing some discounts to be made for consumers. The last amendment was effective in the fact that it narrowed discount rates. The current law is to be reconsidered by the culture minister every three years, and it can be changed through amendments. Online bookstores have sustained their growth with discounts and convenience as weapons, brick and mortar stores have slowed in their decline while more unique, smaller bookstores are growing in number.

One can become curious at this point about the opinion of those who are directly involved with book publishing. According to a survey conducted in 2016 by the Korea Publishers Society, 90.9 percent of bookstores said the current law should be sustained or even strengthened (lower discount rate). 74.6 percent of publisher respondents agreed, while 64.8 percent of reader respondents said the same. In a survey of 379 publishers, bookstores and readers

published in a webzine called *Publishing N* by KPIPA in 2019, there were twice as many more respondents who supported a stronger fixed book price policy (53.8 percent) than there were those who called for the law to be relaxed (23.8 percent). However, there are many consumers who oppose the current fixed book price policy because it limits discounts. This is because most people equate discounts to low prices and there are few people who try to understand the characteristics of books, which are vast in variety and few in copies in comparison.

<Opinions on fixed book price policy changes and direction>  
(Respondents: publishers, bookstore executives, researchers)

(Unit: %)



\*N=379.

\*Reference material: Fourth issue (May 2019) of KPIPA webzine *Publishing N* under "Focus feature – Potential for publishing content utilization seen higher than paper books (Written by Kim Bo-gyung, head of publishing company Jiwain Books)". The graph in the article has been converted into percentages (<http://nzine.kpipa.or.kr/detail.php?idx=64>).



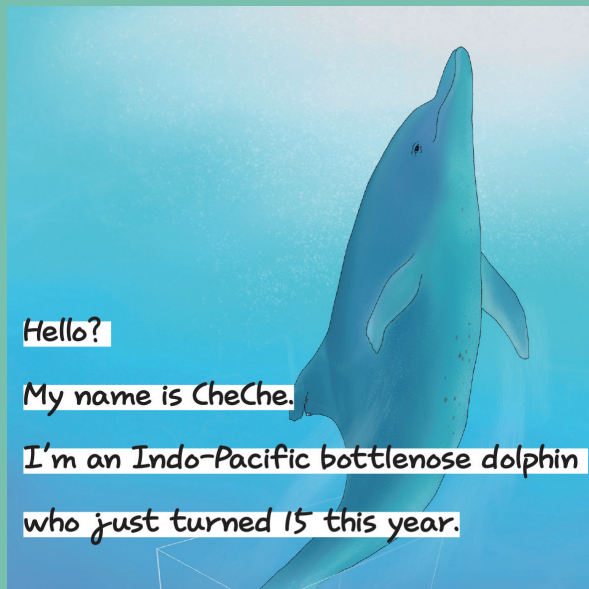
As the size of the e-book market grows bigger and newer services emerge, a more complicated solution to the problems that the fixed book price system faces in South Korea is required. For example, the unlimited subscription plan that Amazon provides for its Kindle readers allows readers to read tens of thousands of books a month at a minimum price of about 5,500 won. In a country where there is no fixed book price system in place, this kind of service causes few problems, but for a country that does have one, the situation changes. Several e-book providers have already adopted this business model, and there is no legal article to say they are breaking the fixed book price rule. An e-book can be sold at full price when it is bought separately, but under unlimited subscription plans the book is provided at nearly no cost, causing conflict under the current law.

The South Korean government (culture ministry) is scheduled to review the current fixed book price law, which is in its fifth year and is seeking opinions on the assessment of the law and what direction it should take. It has been collecting views from a variety of people who are affected by this law. In September 2019, a public hearing will be held in parliament to discuss amendments to the law. In South Korea, the fixed book price issue is still as hot as any.

## New Books

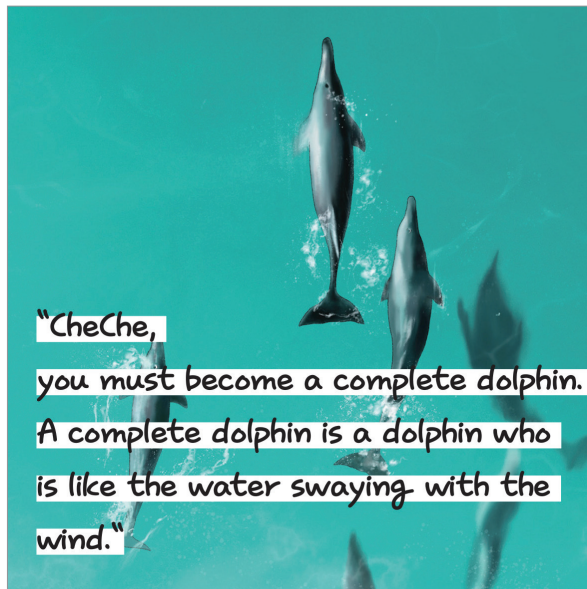
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# Before Overtaxing Oneself

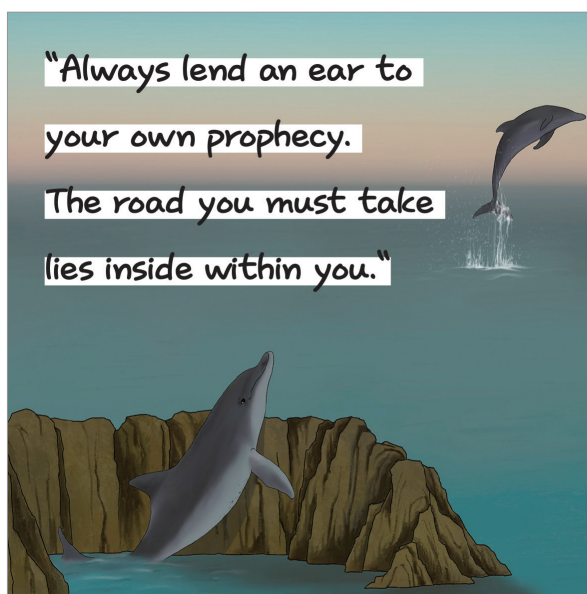




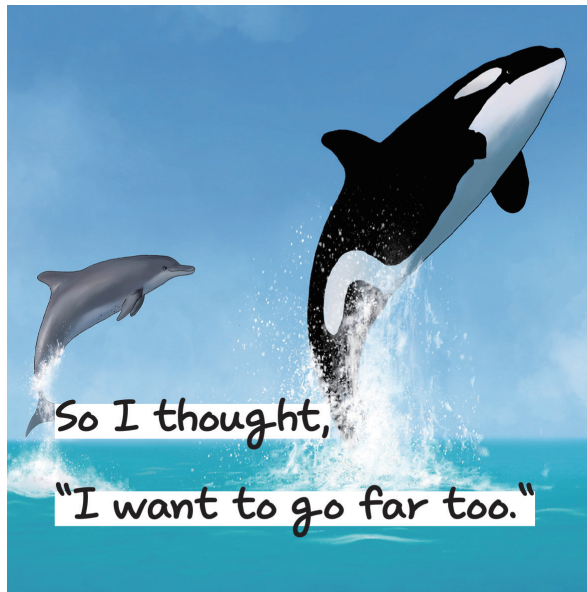
My grandfather  
said to me,  
while I was in  
the midst of  
thoughts



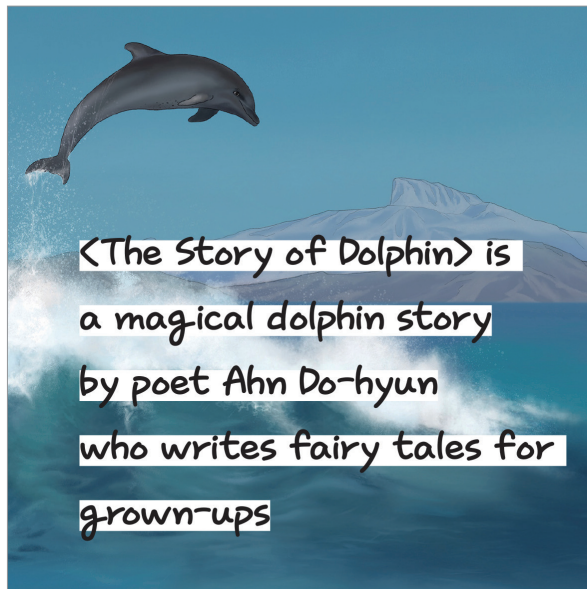
"CheChe,  
you must become a complete dolphin.  
A complete dolphin is a dolphin who  
is like the water swaying with the  
wind."



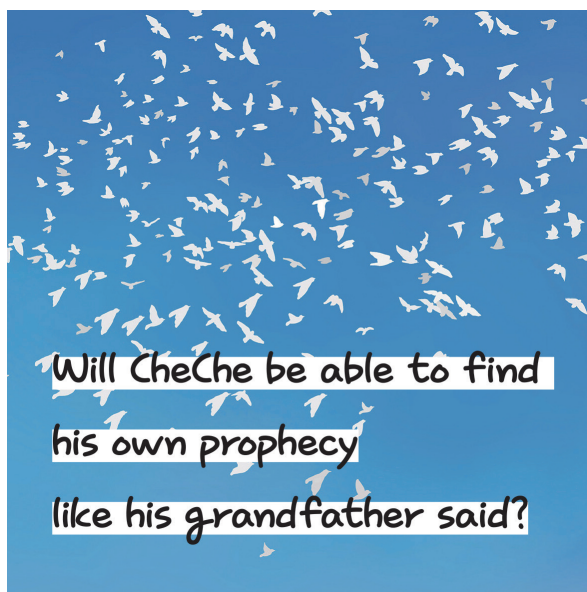
"Always lend an ear to  
your own prophecy.  
The road you must take  
lies inside within you."



So I thought,  
"I want to go far too."



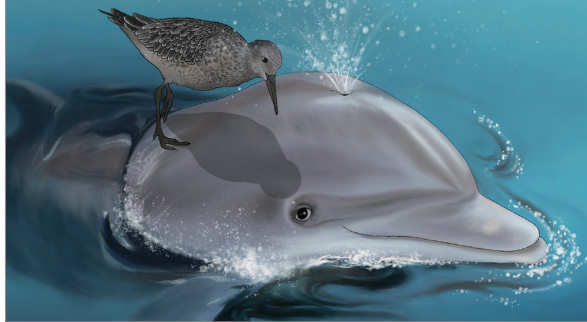
<The Story of Dolphin> is  
a magical dolphin story  
by poet Ahn Do-hyun  
who writes fairy tales for  
grown-ups



Will CheChe be able to find  
his own prophecy  
like his grandfather said?



If you're curious to learn about  
Che Che's adventure and the message  
that one dolphin has for the human  
world then let's read together!



### The Story of Dolphin

Author - Do-hyun Ahn

Publisher - human & books

Genre - Novel

## Best Sellers

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# South Korean Bestsellers in July

**Bestsellers at South Korea's biggest online bookstores,  
Kyobo Book Centre and Interpark**

Written by Choi Ha-Yeong

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Itching to know what books sold the most in South Korea in July? Below is a comparison of the top 10 bestselling books at South Korea's biggest online bookstores Kyobo Book Centre and Interpark as of the third week of July. With the exception of some small differences, the two bookstores saw the same books take up spots from 1 to 6. However, for the rest of the bestsellers, Kyobo saw liberal arts books and novels take up the remainder of its list while Interpark's list included self-help books and books for children.

Kim Young-ha's *Why Travel*, which topped the bestseller lists at both vendors a month ago, dropped down a spot in July after the release of Rhyu Si-min's *European City Travels 1*. Rhyu and Kim



both recently appeared in various television programs in South Korea, driving demand for their books and subsequently landing both their publications in the coveted top spots of the bestseller lists.

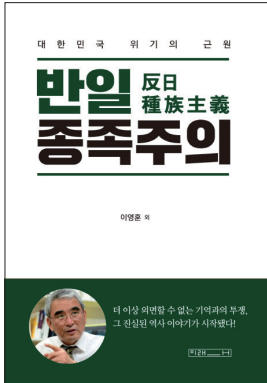

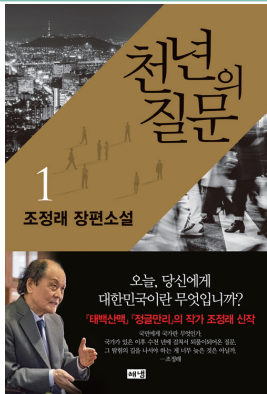
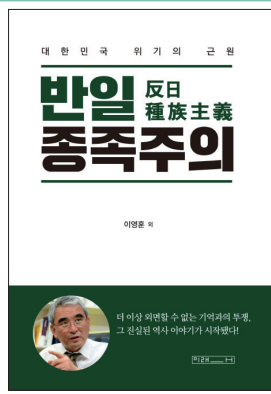
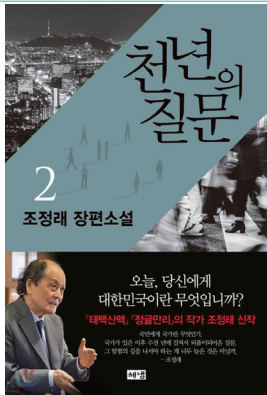
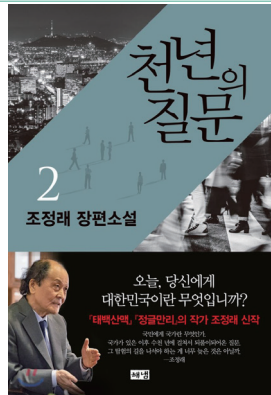
All three parts of Jo Jung-rae's latest novel *The Question of a Thousand Years* found themselves sitting on the bestseller lists. *The Question of a Thousand Years* was first released in a series via Naver's Audioclip service. Naver is an online portal operator in South Korea. The fact that all three parts of the novel made it on to the bestseller lists clearly shows the popularity of both the author and the series.

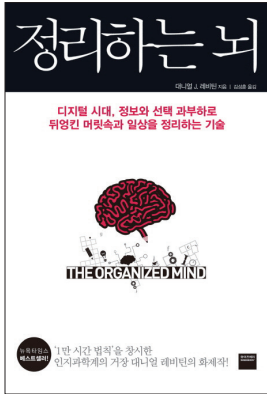
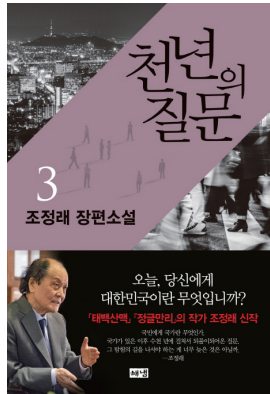
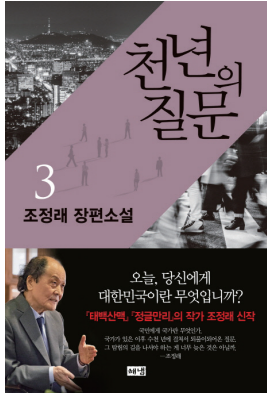



Meanwhile, books related to history like Seol Min-seok's *Seol Min-seok's Romance of the Three Kingdoms 1* and *Seol Min-seok's Great Adventure into Korean History 2* in addition to Lee Young-hoon's *Anti-Japan Tribalism* and Choi Tae-seong's *The Utility of History* newly appeared on the bestseller lists. This could be attributed to the recent public interest towards the establishment of correct historical consciousness, hence boosting the popularity of books on history.


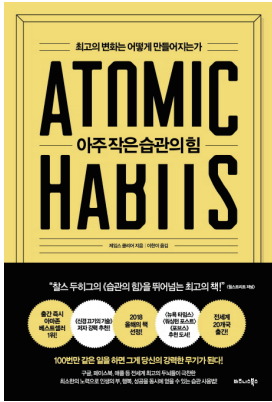
\* The following lists were provided from the official websites of Kyobo Book Centre and Interpark based on data from the third week of July.

## <Top 10 Bestsellers>

No.	Kyobo Book Centre	Interpark
1	 <p><i>European City Travels 1</i> Author   Rhyu Si-min Publisher   Saenggakeuigil Genre   Liberal Arts</p>	 <p><i>European City Travels 1</i> Author   Rhyu Si-min Publisher   Saenggakeuigil Genre   Liberal Arts</p>
2	 <p><i>Why Travel (Vacance Edition)</i> Author   Kim Young-ha Publisher   Munhakdongne Genre   Essay</p>	 <p><i>Why Travel (Vacance Edition)</i> Author   Kim Young-ha Publisher   Munhakdongne Genre   Essay</p>
3	 <p><i>Seol Min-seok's Romance of the Three Kingdoms 1</i> Author   Seol Min-seok Publisher   Segyesa Genre   Liberal Arts</p>	 <p><i>The Question of a Thousand Years 1</i> Author   Jo Jung-rae Publisher   Hainaim Genre   Novel</p>

No.	Kyobo Book Centre	Interpark
4	 <p><i>Anti-Japan Tribalism</i>            Author   Lee Young-hoon            Publisher   Miraesa            Genre   Politics</p>	 <p><i>Seol Min-seok's Romance of the Three Kingdoms 1</i>            Author   Seol Min-seok            Publisher   Segyesa            Genre   Liberal Arts</p>
5	 <p><i>The Question of a Thousand Years 1</i>            Author   Jo Jung-rae            Publisher   Hainaim            Genre   Novel</p>	 <p><i>Anti-Japan Tribalism</i>            Author   Lee Young-hoon            Publisher   Miraesa            Genre   Politics</p>
6	 <p><i>The Question of a Thousand Years 2</i>            Author   Jo Jung-rae            Publisher   Hainaim            Genre   Novel</p>	 <p><i>The Question of a Thousand Years 2</i>            Author   Jo Jung-rae            Publisher   Hainaim            Genre   Novel</p>

No.	Kyobo Book Centre	Interpark
7	 <p><b>정리하는 뇌</b> 다aniel levitin 지음   김희영 옮김 디지털 시대, 정보와 선택 과부하로 뒤엉킨 머릿속과 일상을 정리하는 기술 THE ORGANIZED MIND 1만 시간 열력을 창시한 인지과학계의 가장 대니얼 레비틴의 화제작!</p>	 <p><b>천년의 질문</b> 3 조정래 장편소설 오늘 당신에게 대한민국이란 무엇입니까? '태백산맥', '장길ان의 작가 조정래 신작' 이제껏 읽지 않았던 역사가 있는 우리 조국의 숨겨진 비극을 읽으십시오. 그 한낱의 삶을 사색하는 것 또한 높은 것은 아닐까 조정래</p>
	<p><b><i>The Organized Mind</i></b> Author   Daniel Levitin Publisher   Wiseberry Genre   Liberal Arts</p>	<p><b><i>The Question of a Thousand Years 3</i></b> Author   Jo Jung-rae Publisher   Hainaim Genre   Novel</p>
8	 <p><b>천년의 질문</b> 3 조정래 장편소설 오늘 당신에게 대한민국이란 무엇입니까? '태백산맥', '장길ان의 작가 조정래 신작' 이제껏 읽지 않았던 역사가 있는 우리 조국의 숨겨진 비극을 읽으십시오. 그 한낱의 삶을 사색하는 것 또한 높은 것은 아닐까 조정래</p>	 <p><b>설민석의 세계사</b> 2 대모험 이제부터 우리는 다들</p>
	<p><b><i>The Question of a Thousand Years 3</i></b> Author   Jo Jung-rae Publisher   Hainaim Genre   Novel</p>	<p><b><i>Seol Min-seok's Great Adventure Into Korean History 2</i></b> Author   Jam Story, Seol Min-seok Publisher   Dankkumi (Dankkum Dream) Genre   Children</p>
9	 <p>BERNARD WERBER 베르나르 베르베르 장편소설 한자만 옮김 죽음 1</p>	 <p>우리 천재 엉덩이 탐정 8 괴도와 납치된 신부 사건 Mirae 트롤과 괴뢰 탐정화 시리즈</p>
	<p><b><i>Depuis l'au-Dela 1</i></b> Author   Bernard Werber Publisher   Open Books Genre   Novel</p>	<p><b><i>Genius Butt Detective 8</i></b> Author   Troll Publisher   Mirae&amp;Iseum Genre   Picture Book</p>

No.	Kyobo Book Centre	Interpark
10	 <p>“길을 잃고 발할할 때마다 나는 역사에서 답을 찾았다”</p> <p>500만 명의 가슴을 울린 인문학 명단의</p>	 <p>최고의 변화는 어떻게 만들어지는가</p> <p>ATOMIC 아주 작은 습관의 힘 HABITS</p> <p>“찰스 두히그의 (습관의 힘)을 뛰어넘는 최고의 책”</p> <p>100만 번 읽은 일을 하면 그거 당신의 공짜인 부가가 된다</p>
	<p><i>The Utility of History</i> Author   Choi Tae-seong Publisher   Dasanchodang Genre   Liberal Arts</p>	<p><i>Atomic Habits</i> Author   James Clear Publisher   Business Books Genre   Self-development</p>

## Book Summary

# Export Prospects of Korean Books

KPIPA's Choice for Supporting Abstract · Sample Translation

### *From Poetry*

#### 1. Publication Details

Imprint | SANZINI  
 Title | From Poetry  
 Author | Choi Yeongcheol  
 Genre | Literature  
 Format | 140×205  
 Binding | Paperback  
 Pages | 224pages  
 ISBN | 9788965455974

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#### 3. Marketing Information

Keyword | Poetry; poet; writing; poetry theory; essay  
 Target Readership | Adult





#### **4. About the Author and Illustrator**

Kang made his literary debut in 1986 at the Hankook Ilbo Daily Spring Literary Competition. His published poetry anthologies include *It's drying up*, *It's scattering*, *Rolled up*, *I sent a Gumjeongsan*, *Poke at*, *Whistle*, *Shadow Lake*, and *Sunbathing Furniture*.

Kang has also published a handwritten poetry anthology titled *Thistle*, a coming-of-age story titled *Eojung's Story*, and the essay collection *Camelia Red and Sour Tears*.

Kang is the recipient of the Baek Seok Literary Award, the Lee Hyeonggi Literary Award, and the Choi Gyerak Literary Award.

#### **5. About the Book**

In a world where usefulness has become society's top priority, poets are called to rise up and challenge utilitarianism as a way of life. Kang Sugeul reflects on his experiences in this ode to the art form that sustained him physically and emotionally for three decades.

Kang found inspiration in suffering, despair, and failure—through the hurts, betrayals, and cruelty of life. His role was to welcome pain like an honored guest and steward it with care. *From Poetry* is an exploration of the poetic medium, a reflection on poets' responsibilities, and a testament to the hope that poetry offers to the weary and downtrodden.

Poets like Kang have long criticized civilization and capitalism by exposing society's selfish underpinnings, at the same time extending a warm hand to those living on the margins. Kang, whose poetry anthology *I sent a Gumjeongsan* was voted by Busan citizens as the book of the city, shares his thoughts in this series of essays about the honesty of poetry.

## Potato Flowers

### 1. Publication Details

Imprint | Youlhwadang  
Title | Potato Flowers  
Subtitle | Photo Essays by Kim Jee Youn  
Author | Kim Jee Youn  
Genre | Arts & Culture  
Format | 140×220  
Binding | Paperback  
Pages | 208pages  
ISBN | 9788930105996

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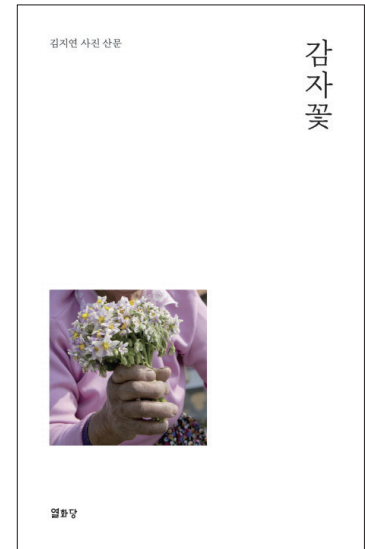
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### 3. Marketing Information

Keyword | photography; travel; essay  
Target Readership | teenagers, young adults, adults

### 4. About the Author and Illustrator

Born in 1948 in Gwangju, South Jeolla Province in South Korea, Kim Jee Youn is a photographer and an exhibition manager who is interested in archiving and shedding new light on the development of the modern history of Korea. She studied Drama at the Seoul Institute of the Arts and went on to receive a degree in English Literature from Korea National Open University. Kim currently serves as Director of Gyeonam Jungmiso Community Museum in Jinan, North Jeolla Province and runs Seohak-dong Photography Lab in Jeonju. Previously, she held solo exhibitions under the titles Jungmiso (2002), Modernization Store (2010), and Ancient Room (2012), and organized numerous exhibitions including People of Gyeonam Village (2006) and Bundle (2012). Her publications include photo collections Jungmiso's Heritage (2013) and Standing in an Empty Room (2015).



## 5. About the Book

Kim Jee Youn's previous solo exhibitions featured old every day images such as an elderly lady with her hair in a neat bun sitting alone in a decrepit room, a grave surrounded by basalt fences on Jeju Island with the sea in the background, a worn-out barbershop signboard with a few missing letters, and a rice mill with a deep green roof. What does the author try to convey through such scenes? As her nickname "archivist" implies, Kim holds an ardent wish to pass on fond and affectionate memories to future generations.

Potato Flowers is the first essay collection from Kim Jee Youn, whose unadorned yet unique style of writing was already made evident in the short statements included in her previous books of photographs. In this latest title, Kim explains the reason why she first took up photography, and shares her thoughts on the objects that she continuously strives to capture. Encompassing her personal history, this book delivers a full representation of Kim Jee Youn. In addition, the author coyly reveals the lingering affection for writing that she's retained since her youth.

Part One includes Kim's essays about her work as an archivist, organized in a chronological order and accompanied by photographs, some of which have never been seen before. Part Two focuses on her inner world and personal experiences. As seen in the works featured in Part One, Kim Jee Youn had initially been regarded as a conscientious documentarist more than anything else. However, the "Set and See" series launched in 2014 allowed her to delve into the realm of the subconscious and pay attention to her inner anxieties. The "Geonjisan" series, presented here for the first time, emphasizes whole movements or sensations by destroying shapes rather than focusing on people. And what unfolds next to these photographs in such a frank manner are the author's deeply personal stories—such as the agony induced by insomnia, birthdays spent alone, and memories of childhood.

## *Atelier of the Riverside*

### 1. Publication Details

Imprint | Youlhwadang  
Title | Atelier of the Riverside  
Subtitle | Pictorial essays by Chang Ucchin  
Author | Chang Ucchin  
Genre | Arts & Culture  
Format | 150×228  
Binding | Hard cover  
Pages | 224pages  
ISBN | 9788930105873

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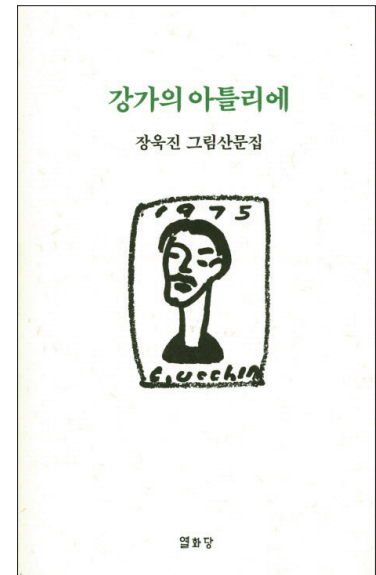
Keyword | art; design; essay; contemporary Korean art  
Target Readership | teenagers, young adults, adults

### 4. About the Author and Illustrator

Born in Yeon-gi, North Chungcheong Province in South Korea, Chang Ucchin graduated from Yangjeong High School and studied Western art at Teikoku Art School (now Musashino Art University) in Tokyo, Japan. After Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945, Chang began working at the National Museum of Korea. During the Korean War, he served as a painter for the military. From 1954 to 1960, he taught in the College of Fine Arts at Seoul National University. He was thrice appointed a judge for the National Art Exhibition of the Republic of Korea, and held numerous solo and group exhibitions.

### 5. About the Book

After the death of his best friend Hyeon Su, Dohun starts studying safety accidents and how they are caused, which earns him the nickname "safety detective" from his friends. This book draws in children with the subject of ghosts and a detective to teach them about safety knowledge. Readers will be absorbed in the story through the different chilling settings for different ghosts and the chilling incidents behind the deaths of the ghosts. Investigating



along with Dohun, readers find out the truth behind each ghost's death before moving on to the next incident. The author used what she has experienced teaching children when writing this story. This book is written in easy and short sentences so that it is easy to read and relatable to children. In addition, the book contains "Safety Detective Dohun's Classroom for Safety", which is designed to help children check how well they are informed on safety matters and learn common safety knowledge.

## Baekbeom Ilji

### 1. Publication Details

Imprint | Youlhwadang

Title | Baekbeom Ilji

Author | Kim Koo

Genre | Humanities

Format | 215×305

Binding | Paperback

Pages | 384pages

ISBN | 9788930106337

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### 3. Marketing Information

Keyword | history; autobiography; education; literature; independence movement

### 4. About the Author and Illustrator

Kim Koo (1876–1949), also known by his pen name Baekbeom, was a Korean nationalist politician and a leader of the Korean independence movement against the Japanese Empire. He joined the Donghak Movement, a rebellion against the state and foreign oppressions in 1893. Later, he fled to Manchuria and established the Korean Liberation Army. After the March 1st Movement in 1919, he exiled himself to Shanghai, China, where he later became the president of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea in 1927. Following Korea's liberation from Japan's colonial rule, Kim committed

himself to establishing a unified and autonomous government in Korea. He was assassinated in 1949.

## **5. About the Book**

The first edition of *Baekbeom Ilji* was published in 1947, two years before Kim Koo's death. Unfortunately, the book had an unfortunate beginning as the original text had been significantly tampered with, consequently erasing much of the author's voice and diminishing the vividness of his descriptions of some of the most intense moments during the independence movement that took place in Shanghai and Chongqing, China. Not only was Baekbeom's idiosyncratic, rugged style of writing embellished, but also some of the names of people and places were mistaken and extensive passages omitted. As a result, the first edition is still judged to be the most unfaithful text to the original.

With that in mind, Youlhwadang planned for many years to publish a new, authentic version of *Baekbeom Ilji*. The compilation project, when it finally came to light, took three years to complete. The new edition of *Baekbeom Ilji* is comprised of Chinese and Korean versions both based on the author's original handwritten manuscripts. Another three years were spent on further revising the text and correcting any errors before making it available to the public. The two volumes both employ the vertical writing system found in the original handwritten manuscript, not to mention the same format and size. In East Asia, the vertical writing system is regarded as the fundamental principle of transcription and publication. Therefore, we believe that restoring this for contemporary readers is the best way to convey not only the format of the original but also Baekbeom's voice and spirit. We take pride in presenting a truly authentic version of the historical text.

We've aimed for originality not just in form but also in content—by way of thorough proofreading and editing. Before compiling all the relevant content, we drew up an extensive plan to scrupulously examine each and every edition or translation based on the original handwritten manuscript, and then corrected the numerous errors that we found. For the sake of historical usage, both volumes contain detailed indexes, and the Korean version has some 760 annotations by the editor to enhance readers' understanding.



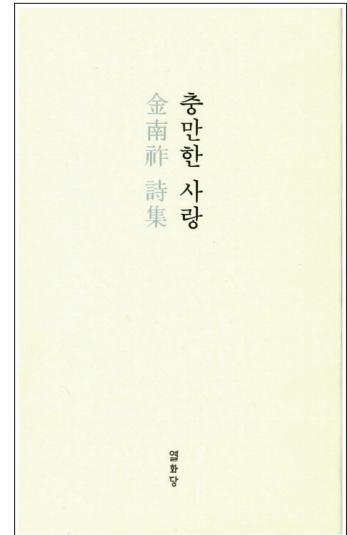
## *Fullness of Love*

### 1. Publication Details

Imprint | Youlhwadang  
Title | Fullness of Love  
Author | Kim Nam Jo  
Genre | Literature  
Format | 135×220  
Binding | Hardcover  
Pages | 174pages  
ISBN | 9788930105958

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### 3. Marketing Information

Keyword | Literature; poetry; education  
Target Readership | Youth, young adult, adult

### 4. About the Author and Illustrator

Born 1927 in Daegu, North Gyeongsang Province, Kim Nam Jo graduated from the Department of Korean Literature at the College of Education in Seoul National University. He made his literary debut in 1950 on the Yeonghap Newspaper with a collection of poems including "Constellations" and "Afterimage," and published his first anthology *Life* in 1953—the first of eighteen poetry anthologies in his career. Kim has also been published in multiple award anthologies. In 1997, he released a collection of vignettes titled *Beautiful People*. Kim is the recipient of the Korean Poets' Association Prize, the Seoul City Cultural Prize, the Korea Arts and Culture Prize, and the Manhae Prize. Currently, he is a professor emeritus at Sookmyung Women's University and a member of the National Academy of Arts.

## 5. About the Book

"You have lived ninety years / The clock says / I reply, I know // The clock asks, / What is your wish? / I reply, / An ego born of my heart / And effort to do my best / But a moment passes / And I change my reply / Love, wealth / And longevity // Bursting into laughter, the clock says: / From the most worldly of men / I expected no less... / Without rest, the clock / goes and waits" ("Clock" by Kim Nam Jo)

Youlhwadang is proud to present the 18th poetry anthology by the poet Kim Nam Jo, who celebrates his 90th birthday this year. This anthology includes "Clock," winner of the Jeong Jiyong Literature Prize, and 63 new compositions.

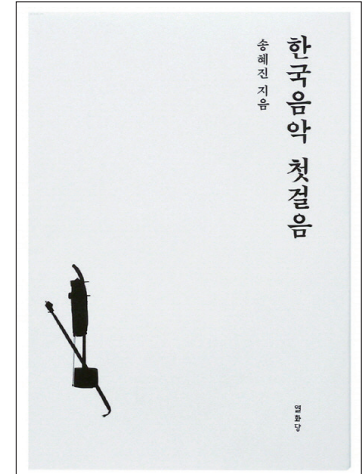
Kim's first anthology *Life* was published in 1953, kicking off a 64-year career as a poet. As the oldest member of the world of Korean poetry, Kim confesses, "For the past decade, I'd wanted to lay down my pen and spend my time reading poetry and books by other people. But every time I saw something or thought about something, the poetry would overflow inside me, and the words wouldn't let me go until I'd put them to paper." In the preface to this anthology, Kim writes, "Even now, in the twilight of my years, the fact that I still see, feel, learn, and resonate with the world remains the same." In spite of the unspoken rigors of the artistic process, it is clear that poetry is Kim's calling in life.

In the preface, Kim also remarks, "The significance of life, the awe of responding to that revelation, and the slow but reverent growth of our outlook on it—all these things are a curious blessing, a source of gratitude, and the wellspring of our most fervent desires. These notions occupied my mind all throughout the writing process." He adds, "I would like to publish another anthology after this one." Kim's powerful validation of a life filled with love and hope rings loud and clear in this anthology.

## *An Introduction to Korean Traditional Music*

### 1. Publication Details

Imprint | Youlhwadang  
Title | An Introduction to Korean Traditional Music  
Author | Song Hye-jin  
Genre | Arts & culture  
Format | 182×257  
Binding | Hard cover  
Pages | 128pages  
ISBN | 9788930105859



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### 3. Marketing Information

Keyword | music; performing arts; education; traditional culture  
Target Readership | teenagers, young adults, adults

### 4. About the Author

Song Hye-jin majored in gugak at the College of Music at Seoul National University and received both her master's and doctoral degrees from the Graduate School of Korean Studies at the Academy of Korean Studies. Previously, she was a visiting scholar at Durham University, UK and an academic researcher at the National Gugak Center and served as the Artistic Director of Sookmyung Gayageum Orchestra. Currently, Song teaches in the Graduate School of Cultural Heritage Arts at Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul, Korea.

Song made her debut as a music critic by winning the Annual Spring Writing Contest hosted by the daily newspaper The Dong-A Ilbo; she then went on to receive a number of prestigious awards including the KBS Gugak Media Publication Award and the Nangye Music Award Grand Prix. Her publications include Korean Musical Instruments, One Hundred Years of Korean Traditional Music, Let's Listen to Korean Traditional Music, Dreaming Geomungo, and Confucian Ritual Music of Korea.

## 5. About the Book

This book is an abbreviated introduction to the traditional music of Korea, offering brief explanations of the history and branches of gugak, as well as an overview of the path that modern gugak has taken since the early twentieth century.

The traditional music of Korea has several names—gugak, hanguk (Korean) music, or minjok (national or folk) music. Although the concept and significance of each can be interpreted in several different ways, the term “gugak” is most widely used to refer to the artistic phenomenon that has advocated and transformed the musical traditions of the Joseon dynasty. Gugak came into universal use to mean the country’s traditional music, encompassing the musical practices of both the court and the common people, when the national institute overseeing the traditional music of Korea renamed itself “The National Gugak Center” in 1950.

This introductory book on gugak consists of three parts. The first part divides the traditional music of Korea into three branches—court music, seonbi (the elite class) music, and seomin (the common people) music—and explains the varying characteristics of each. The second part looks at the path that modern gugak has taken since the early twentieth century with a focus on the history of transmission. The third and final part describes the scope, classification, types, and materials of Korean traditional musical instruments, and explains the characteristics of each using photographs. This book contains ancient illustrations and photographs from modern times related to traditional Korean music as well as images of various musical instruments. All in all, it is a useful introduction to gugak that can be widely used among scholars and general readers wishing to delve into the world of traditional Korean music.

## *King Sejong's Knowledge Management Techniques*

### 1. Publication Details

Imprint | THE ACADEMY OF KOREAN STUDIES PRESS

Title | King Sejong's Knowledge Management Techniques

Author | Chung Yoonjae, Lee Ikjoo, Park Hyunmo, Jun SeongH, Lee Eunhee, Song Hyejin

Genre | Humanities

Format | 152×225

Binding | Paperback

Pages | 204pages

ISBN | 9791158661441



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### 3. Marketing Information

Keyword | Management; Sejong; nation; knowledge; policy

Target Readership | Young adult, adult

### 4. About the Author

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Lee Ikjoo

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Park Hyunmo

Majored in Korean political ideology; chief of the Sejong Leadership ResearchCenter at Yeosu University

Jun SeongHo

Majored in economics; social sciences professor at the Academy of Korean Studies

Lee Eunhee

Majored in astronomy; senior researcher at Yonsei University Observatory

Song Hyejin

Majored in Korean music studies; professor at the Graduate School of Traditional Culture and Arts at Sookmyung Women's University

## **5. About the Book**

King Sejong of Korea's Joseon dynasty was known for his love of learning. With his insight and drive, he actively facilitated policy discussions with his advisors. This book uses written records from Sejong's time to analyze the kind of knowledge the king applied in different contexts to govern the country.

This book uses the term "knowledge management" to define Sejong's method of governance. Knowledge management includes the ability to acquire accurate information in a given situation, respond optimally, and convince collaborators to accept leadership methods as authoritative. Sejong's great capacity for knowledge management ensured trust and support from his advisors, allowing him to enact solid governance and realize unified policies. In this aspect, King Sejong was a brilliant knowledge manager.

This book is based on a combination of knowledge management research and six written records from Sejong's era: the Goryeosa (History of Goryeo), the Chipyeongyoram (Exemplar for Efficient Government), the Hunminjeongeum Haerye (Explanations and Examples of the correct Sounds for the Instruction of the People), the Nongsa jikseol (Straight Talk on Farming), the Chiljongsan Naepeyon and Chiljeongsan Oebyeon (Calculations of the Seven Luminaries, Chinese/Arabic Edition), and the Sejong Sillok akbo (Sheet Music from the Annals of King Sejong).