

2023.08

vol. **61**

# 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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## From the Margins to the Center: Korean Mystery Literature

Written by Han Lee (Chief editor of the magazine *Mystery*)

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Korean mystery literature originated in the unique conditions of the Japanese occupation. Introduced under the names of spy novels, detective stories, and detective novels, mystery literature was translated and adapted mainly from newspaper serials. A representative work is Arthur Conan Doyle's *Three Students*, which Haemongsaeng adapted and published as *Faithful Servant* on *Taeseomunyesinbo* in 1918. Most of the works serialized in newspapers at the time were re-translations of works by Ruiiko Kuriowa, a Japanese author of adapted novels. By the 1920s, adapted mystery novels moved out of newspapers and were published in magazines such as *Hacksaengkye*, *Chungnyeon*, and *Dongmyung*, and emphasized that they were intellectual works for readers with a certain level of reading ability, such as

educated young adults and students.

However, the writers who translated and wrote mystery literature were negative about being known as mystery writers and tried to hide it if they could. In the 1920s, authors such as Yang Ju-Dong, Lee Ha-Yoon, Kim Hwan-Tae, Kim Kwang-Seop, Lee Heon-Gu, Kim Yoo-Jung, Lee Seok-Hoon, Ahn Hoe-Nam, and Bang In-Geun published mystery novels. Still, due to the public's perception of mystery literature as cheap entertainment, they used nicknames such as Haemongsaeng, Pipisaeng, Spring Breeze, Polaris, Red Light, and Heinrich instead of their real names. This perception, deeply rooted in the minds of intellectuals and the public in the early days of Korean mystery literature, was both a direct and indirect factor in keeping mystery literature on the peripheries for so long.

But today, things have changed. Korean mystery literature has become a hot topic in the global publishing market.



The Korean, Italian, and French covers of the book *The Only Child*



One of the recent trends in Korean mystery literature is that books are often recognized abroad before they go popular in Korea. Seo Mi-Ae's second full-length mystery novel, *The Only Child* (Elixir), published in 2010, along with her earlier work, *The Garden of Dolls* (Everyway), did not receive much marketing support from the publisher and was not well received by readers. However, it turned out to be a stroke of good fortune that the publisher translated the first part of the novel and a general summary and took it to the Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany the year after its publication. Although the publisher (Noble Mind, the publisher of the first edition) no longer exists, the book benefited from the National Translation Grant program, and overseas rights began to be sold, as publishing officials insisted on the rest of the translations through their agencies.

The author, Seo Mi-Ae, says that signing with Harper Collins, an American publishing giant, made it easier for her to strike copyright deals with publishers from other countries. Being published by Harper Collins acted as a kind of guarantee check. As a result, *The Only Child* has been published in 16 countries, including the United States, Germany, France, and Italy, and the subsequent book, *All Secrets Have a Name* (Elixir), released in 2021, is also going through publishing contracts seamlessly. The book *The Night Your Star Disappeared* (Elixir) sold more than 50,000 copies, which is unusual for a mystery novel. It is an impressive number considering the domestic mystery market, where it is difficult to get past the first edition.

Meanwhile, the rights deal for video production is working out well. The book *The Only Child* was with Carnival Film & Television in the UK before they reclaimed the rights and signed a deal with a new production company to make the video of the entire trilogy, including *All Secrets Have a Name*. The book *The Night Your Star Disappeared* has also been picked up for a copyright deal for dramatization, and the movie of the same Korean title (the English title is “Her Hobby,” different from the Korean title), based on the medium-length story *Her Secret Hobby* (Everyway), premiered at the 27th Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival (BIFAN) this year and was highly appreciated by the audience.



The book cover and international film poster of *Her Secret Hobby*

There are many cases in which the works of authors known for their pure literature in Korea are introduced overseas first, and become absorbed into the category of mystery literature. A representative work is Yun Ko-Eun’s *The Disaster Tourist*

(Misumsa Publishing). This novel depicts the harmful effects of human greed and capital, centered on the main character, Go Yona, who works for a travel agency that organizes tours to areas devastated by disasters. Although *The Disaster Tourist* was classified as pure literature when it was published in Korea, translator Lizzie Buehler described it as a “satirical Korean eco-thriller with a fierce feminist sensibility” in the English introduction. The book *The Disaster Tourist* went on to win the Crime Writers’ Association (CWA) Dagger for Crime Fiction in Translation in 2021. This is especially remarkable considering that this is the first of Yun’s works to be published in English-speaking countries.

Kim Un-Su, who won the 12th Munhakdongne Fiction Award in 2006 for his novel *Cabinet* (Munhakdongne), is known overseas as a representative of the “K-thriller” genre. His latest novel, *The Plotters* (Munhakdongne), is a thriller that theorizes that there were always plotters behind historical assassinations, and it has been sold to more than 20 countries, including France, Germany, Japan, and the UK, which is significant because the deal was signed before the English version was even published. It is said that Doubleday, a subsidiary of the multinational publishing group Penguin Random House, acquired its copyrights in the US after paying a billion-dollar advance. The novel was nominated for the Grand Prix de Littérature Policière in 2016, being the first Korean author to receive the award, and was chosen as one of the “15 Best Thrillers of the Winter” by the *Chicago Review of Books*

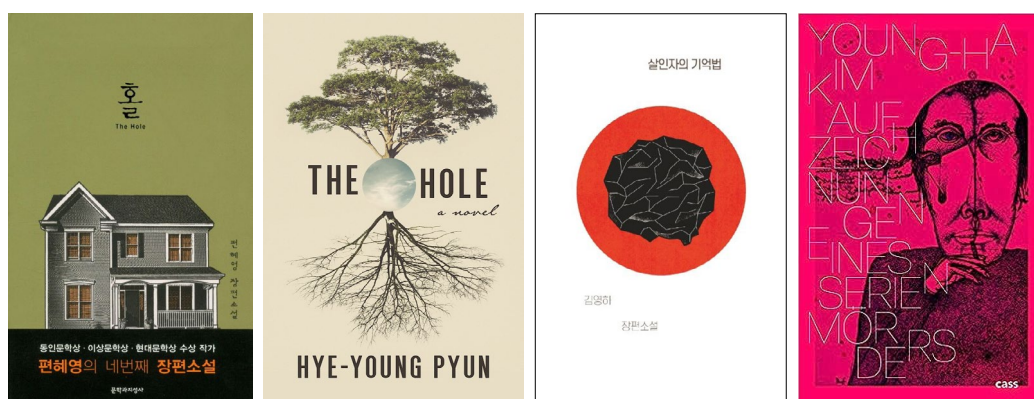
and “Books to Read in January” by the crime fiction webzine *CrimeReads* (crimereads.com).

Pyun Hye-Young’s *The Hole* (Munji Publishing) was an adaptation of the short story *Caring for Plants* (included in the book *A Boy May Get Older Easily* published by the same publishing company), translated and published in *The New Yorker* magazine, into a full-length novel. When the book was published on August 1 in the US, she became the first Korean author to win the Shirley Jackson Awards for mystery, thriller, and horror with the book, and her other works, including *City of Ash and Red* (Changbi), *The Law of Lines* (Munhakdongne), and *The Owl Cries* (Munji Publishing) have been widely read abroad. Kim Young-Ha’s novel *Diary of a Murderer* (Munhakdongne), which features a serial killer with Alzheimer’s disease, won the 2020 Deutscher Krimipreis for International Fiction. The award is the oldest German mystery award and is voted on by mystery critics, novelists, and officials from mystery bookstores for the best mystery novel of the year.

\* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 55 – Go to the article about the book *Diary of a Murderer*  
[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/trend.php?ptype=view&idx=1137&page=1&code=trend  
&category=61](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/trend.php?ptype=view&idx=1137&page=1&code=trend&category=61)



The Korean and English covers of *The Disaster Tourist* and *The Plotters*



The Korean and English covers of *The Hole* and the Korean and German covers of *Diary of a Murderer*

Works with stronger genre colors are also gaining international attention. For example, the book *The Good Son* (Eunhaeng Namu Publishing), written by Jeong You-Jeong, who is known as an influential thriller writer, has been published in more than 20 countries, including Germany, Finland, the US, the UK, and France. The English version of *Seven Years of Darkness* (Eunhaeng Namu Publishing), published in Germany, China, Vietnam, and France, was released in 2020 and received much attention from major media outlets such as *CrimeReads* and *Bustle*. *The Los Angeles Times* commented that *Seven Years of Darkness* is proof that Jeong You-Jeong is one of the best writers

of psychological suspense novels. It was also nominated for the “December Krimi Zeit Bestenliste (Best Mystery Books to Read),” a joint announcement by Germany’s top daily newspaper *Zeit* and radio station Nordwestradio.

The book *The Investigation* (Eunhaeng Namu Publishing) by Lee Jung-Myeong, who is recognized as a master of Faction (a combination of Fact and Fiction), features poet Yoon Dong-Ju and was translated into Italian and won the Premio Selezione Bancarella Award, one of the most prestigious literary prizes in Italy. The first winner of the award was Ernest Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea*, and other notable winners include Boris Pasternak’s *Doctor Zhivago*, Umberto Eco’s *Foucault’s Pendulum*, and John Grisham’s *The Client*. It is notable that not only is Lee the first Korean to win the prize, but also that all five competing works were by Italian authors. It was also shortlisted for the 2015 Independent Foreign Fiction Prize 2015 and has been recognized in over ten countries, including the UK, the US, France, and Spain. Also, Chung Bora’s *Cursed Bunny* (Arzaklivres), with its dark horror and science fiction elements, was shortlisted for The International Booker Prize in 2022. However, while people highly anticipated another winning of the award by a Korean writer after Han Kang’s *The Vegetarian* (Changbi), it eventually fell short.

\* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 47 – Go to the interview of writer Chung Bora

[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=1006&page=1&code=interview&searchopt=subject\\_kr&searchkey=%EC%A0%95%EB%B3%B4%EB%9D%BC](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=1006&page=1&code=interview&searchopt=subject_kr&searchkey=%EC%A0%95%EB%B3%B4%EB%9D%BC)





The Korean and English covers of *The Good Son* and *Seven Years of Darkness*



The Korean and Italian covers of *The Investigation* and the Korean and English covers of *Cursed Bunny*

These all show that Korean genre fiction is highly recognized abroad, and that many foreign publishers are paying attention to Korean mystery literature. For example, French publishing house *Matin Calme* exclusively introduces Korean mystery novels, and its lineup includes works by Jeong Hae-Yeon, Kim Un-Su, Seo Mi-Ae, Do Jin-Ki, and Lee Jong-Kwan.

There has also been an increase in overseas exports and video adaptations of works known as traditional mystery novels. Song Si-Woo's *The House of Red Lilac* (Sigongsas) was published in Thailand and received good reviews, while *Here Comes the Black Dog* (Sigongsas) was published in France. *Running Investigators*

(Sigongsa) was made into an OCN drama starring Lee Yo-Won. The books *The Red House Murder* (Goldenbough), *Le Portrait de La Traviata* (Goldenbough), *The Man Who Knows Me* (Sigongsa), and *The Order Issue* (Sigongsa) by Do Jin-Ki, a former judge, were translated into Chinese. *Le Portrait de La Traviata* and *Mental Suicide* (Goldenbough) were published in France. Also, the book *The Star of Judas* (Goldenbough) is being made into a movie. Plus, Kyobo Story Contest Grand Prize winner Hwang Se-Yeon's *The Man I Killed Returned* (Macaroon) has signed deals in China, Taiwan, and Vietnam and is in development as a movie. The short story *Sophisticated Murder* from *The 2035 SF Mystery* (Nabiclub) has also sold its rights for dramatization. In addition, Kim Jae-Hee's *Gyeongsung Women's Counseling Center* (Book Ocean), Yoon Ja-Young's *Detective Sambi, Specialist in Car Accidents* (Book Ocean), Choi Hyuk-Gon's *The Suspicious Ace Does Not Have a Uniform* (Goldenbough), and *The Night of Two Non-Detectives* (Sigongsa) are also being produced as dramas. The rise of female writers such as Seo Mi-Ae and Jeong You-Jeong is also noticeable. Jeong Hae-Yeon, who released *The Day of Kidnapping* (Sigongsa), *Package* (Goldenbough), and *The Flamingo's Place* (Elixir), has already gained a solid fan base. At the same time, Song Si-Woo, author of *The House of Red Lilac* and *The Island of Crying Bamboo* (Sigongsa), has recently completed a new full-length mystery novel and is preparing to publish it. In addition, Cho Young-Joo, author of *Red Sofa* (Hainaim) and *Nothing Like a Twist* (Yundam L), and Choi Jung-



Won, writer of *The Recipe* (Aphros Media) and *The Red Media* (Aphros Media), are also actively writing. In a time when the boundaries between literary genres are blurring, the works of female writers showing delicate sensitivity are gaining strength in Korea, and their popularity is expected to continue for a while.



*The House of Red Lilac, The Red House Murder, Le Portrait de La Traviata, and The Man I Killed Returned*



*The Day of Kidnapping, The Island of Crying Bamboo, Red Sofa, and The Recipe*

While there is still a tendency in Korea to belittle mystery literature and, more broadly, genre literature itself, compared to so-called pure literature, this divide has long since disappeared overseas. “Thrillers are still treated like second-class citizens in Korea,” said Barbara J. Zitwer, American literary agent. She

added, “The international publishing world has finally embraced Korean writers. Korean writers are revitalizing the thriller genre. Readers who are tired of Scandinavian thrillers are craving something new,” highly appreciating the growing prominence of Korean mystery literature.

\* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 39 – Go to the article by Barbara J. Zitwer

[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/trend.php?ptype=view&idx=646&page=&code=trend&total\\_searchkey=zit](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/trend.php?ptype=view&idx=646&page=&code=trend&total_searchkey=zit)

Writers whose works were previously categorized as pure literature, as in the cases of Kim Un-Su, Kim Young-Ha, Yoon Ko-Eun, and Pyun Hye-Young, are borrowing the techniques of mystery literature to create works that appeal to the tastes of international readers. Writers who love mystery literature and write works that stay close to the genre’s techniques are also receiving high recognition at home and abroad, and are preparing to transform their works into various media, including movies and dramas. At last, Korean mystery literature is moving away from the periphery and toward the center, spreading its wings toward its true heyday.

## SPECIAL PROJECT

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[Book × Music]

# K-pop and the World!

**K-pop Seen in Books and the Changing Trend of Korean Popular Music**

Written by Lim Jin-Mo (Music critic)

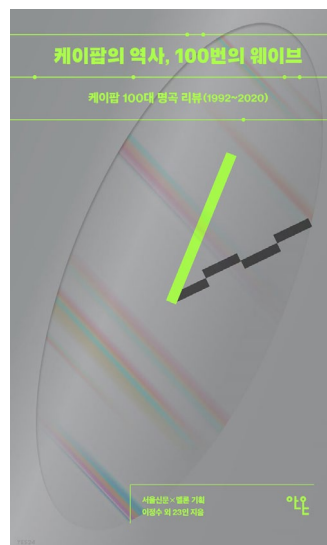
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By their very nature, books are vessels of knowledge encompassing all fields. Endless topics can be written about depending on the material and message. In the [Book × \_\_\_\_] series, experts recommend Korean books in their respective fields that you've been curious about but had trouble discovering more about. Now, let's jump into the infinite world of books through the collaboration of books with various fields.

K-pop, which has almost settled as a common noun like English Pop music, is defined as “young popular music of Korea since the 2000s,” or “music with an international appeal or global popularity.” K-pop is the ultimate composite of terms like “teens,” “dance music,” “overseas expansion,” and “idols.” While we can see the influence of J-pop in vocabulary like “K-pop” and “idol” as it was introduced to the world ahead of K-pop, K-pop today

has a much stronger global presence than J-pop, sweeping across Asia as well as Europe and North America.

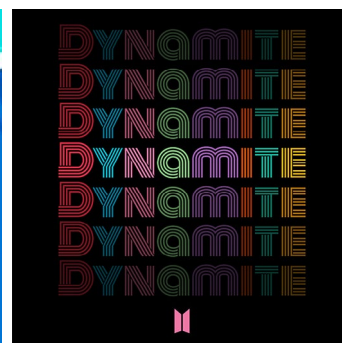
## K-pop seen through 100 songs: from Seotaiji and Boys to BTS



*The History of K-pop: 100 Waves*

*The History of K-pop: 100 Waves* (Anon Books) is a book that looks at the vast leaps and bounds of K-pop's short but epic history. The book features 100 famous K-pop songs selected by 24 officials from the music industry, including pop music critics, and the song “Dynamite” by BTS, released in 2020, marks the finale. As the book's title includes the word “history,” you may wonder who and what songs marked the beginning of K-pop. As with any field, history cannot be made by focusing only on the phenomenon while ignoring the foundation or the beginning. Then, what are the songs that began the history of K-pop? The book *The History of K-pop: 100 Waves* chose “Seotaiji and Boys,”

who debuted in 1992, considering multiple aspects such as teens, dance music, the jump in hip-hop music, and the arrival of a new generation. It picked three songs: “I Know,” “Classroom Idea,” and “Come Back Home.” Seotaiji collaborating with BTS on eight songs at their 25th-anniversary concert is indirect evidence that the group has had a significant impact on the future of K-pop. Following Seotaiji and Boys, “DEUX,” who sang “Turn Around and Look at Me” and “In Summer,” “Clon,” who sang “Kung Ddari Sha Bah Rah,” and “H.O.T.” that sang “Warrior’s Descendant” and “Candy” took over the baton in the history of K-pop. People say that the group H.O.T. marked the true beginning of K-pop in that it clearly set the musical and (singers’) physical identity of *Hallyu* (Korean Wave) and K-pop. In fact, before the word “K-pop” became widely used, Korean popular music was only part of *Hallyu*, along with Korean dramas and movies. However, as Korean popular music became a sensation among the younger generations in various countries due to its strong absorptive power, it was later separated from K-content as K-pop.



Album covers of “TT,” “Gangnam Style,” and “Dynamite”

*The History of K-pop: 100 Waves* is a book for the intense learning of K-pop history, as it uses songs as examples to explain the 30-year history. The particularly impressive part was how the book connected each song with level-up moments of the K-pop genre. For example, the book introduces Wonder Girls' song "Tell Me" with the phrase "The hit song that made the K-pop scene what it is today!" and 2NE1's "I am the Best" with "Wearing swag and attitude, 2NE1 opened a new chapter in global K-pop!" Plus, Big Bang's "Fantastic Baby" was accompanied by the phrase "National favorite that introduced the charms of K-pop to the world, being its own unique genre!" and Twice's "TT" was with the phrase "The song that turned K-pop into a cultural phenomenon in Japan in the 2010s!" Also, PSY's "Gangnam Style," which put K-pop on the global stage in 2012, was described as "Korea's first global hit song: In the beginning, there was Gangnam Style."

Then, how many songs from BTS, formed the following year in 2013, made it into the 100 songs chosen by the book? Five, including "Blood, Sweat & Tears," "Spring Day," "DNA," "Boy With Luv," which ranked 10th on the Billboard Single Chart, and "Dynamite," ranked 1st on the Billboard and include the song that ends the book as mentioned earlier. The fact that they have more songs on the list than any other K-pop artist proves that they are a legend in the genre.



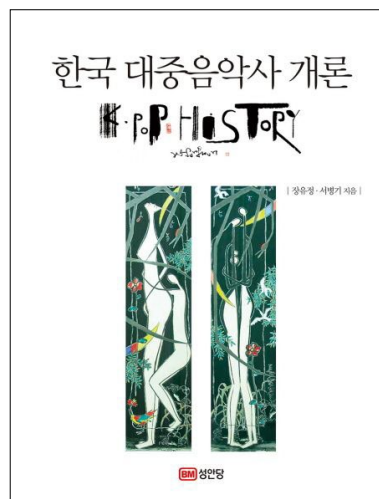
## Korean popular music laid out the foundation for K-pop

Thanks to the rapid growth of K-pop and its soft power, the British magazine *Monocle* ranked Korea as the second most attractive country in the world in 2020. The global success and acceptance of K-pop and K-content come as a surprise to the older generation, who have only witnessed the development of uniqueness and creativity under the influence of foreign music. Korean adults born in the 1950s and 1960s are still dumbfounded that the “*pali-pali* (meaning hurry in Korean)” lifestyle has made Korea a “fast track” country (a positive term for early achievement).

So what should we make of the relationship between 30-year-old K-pop and 100-year-old Korean popular music? At first glance, K-pop, with its powerful performances and delicate arrangements, may seem disconnected from earlier forms of popular music, especially the sorrowful trot music (a type of Korean music influenced by Korean folk songs) during the pre-Baby Boomer generation, and later rock and roll as well as folk songs. Then, should K-pop be separated into its own history, as written in the book *The History of K-pop: 100 Waves*?

The book *Introduction to the History of Korean Popular Music* (Sungandang), written by pop music researcher Jang Yoo-Jung and pop music journalist Seo Byung-Ki, says, “No.” In the preface, Jang wrote, “May the history of popular music expand you, me, and our musical tastes, and may we become

more critical listeners of popular music as we seek out, listen to, and study the origins of today's music.” The book begins by examining the definitions and concepts of popular music. Then it analyzes the growth of Korean popular music in eight parts, from its origins in the 1920s and 1930s to the rise of the K-pop genre in the 2000s.



*Introduction to the History of Korean Popular Music*

The book covers the history of trot music and jazz songs during the gramophone era (the time when Korea was colonized by Japan), new folk songs (Korean folk-like pop music created after the Japanese occupation), the golden age of musical opera, musical pieces during the Korean War, and the pop music during the time when the 8 ground forces of the US military was stationed in Korea after the war.

The book also traces the history of Korean music from the 1960s, when the heyday of trot music began with Lee Mi-Ja's songs, through the 1970s, when the military dictatorship and



the acoustic guitar-based folk song era took hold, to the 1980s, when Cho Yong-Pil's solo career took off, to the 1990s, when Seotaiji and dance music took center stage, and finally to the rise of idol K-pop and its international expansion. In doing so, the book demonstrates that today's K-pop is not a mutant that has suddenly sprung up out of nowhere, but has been building up its potential under a long tradition and is ready for expansion.

The most important factor is "openness," as the writers proclaim throughout the book. K-pop has come to embody our creativity amid an almost unstoppable flow of imported and processed music from around the world, including Japan, the US, Europe, and Latin America. If you follow the steps outlined in the book, you'll see that Korean popular music has filtered many cultural behaviors through its own standards and has moved away from indiscriminate imitation of these cultures. Like K-pop today, it was the fruit of a long-term effort by Korean popular music to move beyond the purism of content and form.

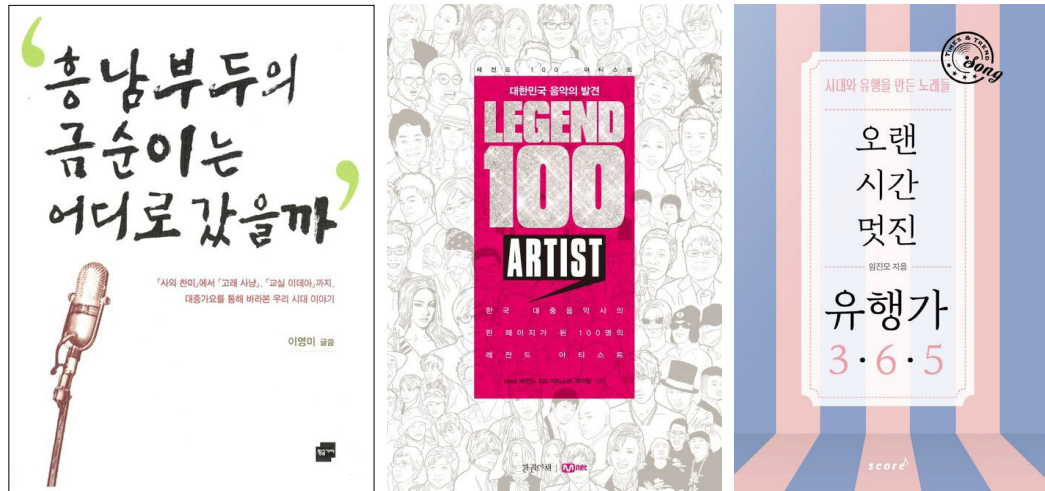
Journalist Seo Byung-Ki, co-writer of the book, wrote about Seotaiji as follows: "His musical achievements did not come from something new – they came from their efforts to transform the mainstream of Korean pop music with minor-genre songs like gangster rap, new metal, and hip hop. The reason why Seotaiji is labeled as a "genre importer" is because the minor genres of music are not new, but came from the West. But that doesn't mean his accomplishments should be underestimated. Even if he brought in a foreign genre, the fact that he was able to make it

relevant to our sensibilities is creative enough.”

From the music made during the Japanese occupation of Korea and the gramophone era to the music during the 8 US military forces' station in Korea, Shin Jung-Hyeon's Rock'n Roll, Kim Min-Ki's folk songs, and songs by Cho Yong-Pil, as well as songs by Seotaiji, which marked the highlights in the history of Korean pop music, was there a piece that was completely independent of the influence of Western music? Researcher Jang Yoo-Jung concludes that trot music is “a representative branch of Korean music that was formed under the influence of Japanese popular music, but is the representative case of foreign music successfully localized in Korea.”

In addition to openness, perhaps an equally important factor in its success is the persistence of a challenging spirit of localization among musicians, rather than uncritical acceptance of foreign music. This is seen in the description of the Korean diva “Insooni.” “Insooni tries to cater to all ages (of listeners), from teenagers to people in their 60s, so she doesn't have a genre. She tried a variety of music, including soul, dance, trot, rock, and ballads, and even tried to combine jazz with Korean music. So what Insooni said on TV a few years ago should be relevant to middle-aged singers. ‘You have to destroy what you are in order to create something new!’”

## Books that give you a deeper glimpse into Korean pop music



*Where Did Geumsun of Heungnam Wharf Go?, Legend 100 Artist, and 365 Old Popular Songs*

The book *Introduction to the History of Korean Popular Music* is a perfect book for people that equate K-pop with Korean popular music, enlightening the historical context. Also, if you read *Where Did Geumsun of Heungnam Wharf Go?* (Goldenbough) written by music critic Lee Young-Mi published in 2002 before the term “K-pop” began to spread wide, it will help find the connection between Korean popular music and K-pop. It attempts to tell the story of the times through popular songs ranging from Yoon Shim-Duk’s “Hymn of Death” released in 1926, to H.O.T’s “Warrior’s Descendant,” released in 1996. Although the book is written from a first-person perspective, the analysis of the times and interpretation of the singers through their lyrics is acute. For example, he commented about singer Kim Choo-Ja’s song “That’s a Lie! That’s a Lie!” as, “If you are a young reader who doesn’t know her voice, then buy her album and listen to it. The song

begins with the lyric ‘That’s a lie’ repeated five times. But each of the repetitions is sung distinctively and poignantly.”

Also, for those who want to approach the entire flow of Korean popular music as a “history seen through singers” or “history seen through songs” rather than as a syntactic description, I recommend reading *Legend 100 Artist* (Hanbook) and *365 Old Popular Songs* (Taerim Score). After all, popular music is a genre led by singers and songs, so there are always moments when it’s beneficial to have an overview as well as a detailed analysis.

### Korean pop music in the life of a maestro



*My Guitar Never Sleeps and Reading Cho Yong-pil*

Although a biography of an artist’s life is the story of a single person, it is meaningful in that the effort to penetrate the point of view in life is a reflection of and confrontation with the times. For those who want to have a different kind of experience with Korean popular music, I emphasize that they must study

Shin Jung-Hyeon and Choi Soo-Pil, two giants who changed the landscape of Korean popular music. Shin Jung-Hyeon's autobiography, *My Guitar Never Sleeps* (Haeto), originally published in a newspaper series, has a special value in that it calls for quiet reflection on the current music scene. He argues that the music circle today tries to be all fancy on the outside only with the basic format, and most importantly, it is taking away artists' spirits. Also, through the stories about himself and other top singers confessed by Shin Jung-Hyeon, who has cultivated so many popular singers and even earned the nickname "Team Shin Jung-Hyeon," you might be able to appreciate Korean rock music. It is not for nothing that we say, "Listen to Shin Jung-Hyeon to know the identity of Korean popular music!"

For Cho Yong-Pil, revered by junior K-pop singers as much as Shin Jung-Hyeon, I recommend *Reading Cho Yong-Pil* (Jakka) by literary critic Yoo Sung-Ho. In it, he describes Cho as a 'poet.' This is an effort to explain that the final author of Cho's songs, whether written by others or himself, was Cho himself, who interpreted and communicated them. "By placing his iconic songs at the forefront of the various historical events of our time, he took care of and guided his own life to be characterized as a giant of his time. This is an aesthetic intention of his that we must embrace!"

K-pop has burst into the global cultural scene and shaken up the order of things. This is something to be proud of because it is a reversal of the Korean culture, which has always admired and

embraced Western culture. It is also the result of the realization of abundant creativity to overcome the limitations of reality, as well as the product of artistic blood, sweat, and tears to transform Western influences into our own. All the books mentioned in this article remind us of this. At the same time, there is a belief that our creative energy and dynamism remain, and a concern that it will not be extinguished by K-pop. K-pop needs to be constantly reinvigorated.

## EXPORT CASE

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# Mexican Readers and Korean Literature

**Korean Literature is the Promised Land of the Western Publishing Market**

Written by Lizette Cisneros (Editor of Nostra Ediciones)

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Although Mexico and South Korea are on different continents and have many differences, they both have a history of fighting for their identity and country. While some events, such as the immigration of the first Korean community to Mexico in 1905, have been erased from Mexico's official history (the historical debt is still being addressed), there is no arguing that the friendly relationship between the two countries is growing stronger every day as they find common ground.

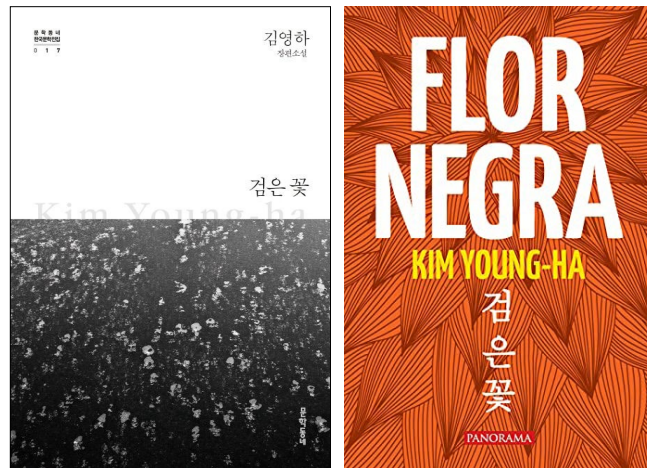
Korea has increasingly expanded its influence through its culture and entertainment industry to bring down the borders, and its music and TV series, especially the drama and action genres, have been favored by Latin American audiences, including Mexico. Latin American audiences have long been influenced by

the United States in their approach to universal human issues in society, and have come to discover unconventional approaches in Eastern societies, including Korea. Such an acceptance of cultural diversity marked the beginning of the “Asian culture boom” within the Latin American population.

For the past few years, Korean artistic trends have heavily influenced young Mexicans. They are forming communities that both criticize and suggest new trends in genres such as K-pop and K-drama. Of course, Korean literature is not left out of this cultural evaluation. It's true that the languages of Korea and Mexico are not very similar, as are the spelling and pronunciation of many other languages. However, recently, translations of Korean literature have become easily available in the Mexican market and have caught the attention of Mexican readers.

The natural sounds, rhythms, and poetic blend of the Korean language stem from an age-old orally transmitted literary tradition, combined with a wide range of subjects such as war, fear of death, supernatural phenomena, solitude, family, love, and betrayal, which have long been used as topics for artistic expression. As a result, Korean literature allows Western readers to empathize with the day-to-day problems faced by the characters, and discover a new side of Korea, bringing them closer to a country they may have only seen on screen.





The Korean and Spanish (Mexican) editions of the book *Flor Negra*

Sometimes it's more worthy to intentionally ignore the features of a translation and contextualize the translation. This is because Korean literature covers a wide range of subjects. Some books, like Kim Young-Ha's *Flor Negra* (English title: *Black Flower*) (Munhakdongne), explore historical issues unknown to both Koreans and Mexicans (e.g., the immigration of Koreans to Mexico in 1905), while others, like Koo Byung-Mo's *La panadería encantada* (English title: *The Wizard Bakery*) (Changbi), Hwang Sun-Mi's *El niño de la pegatina amarilla* (English title: *THE BAD KID STICKERS*) (Woongjin Junior), and Kim Rye-Ryung's *Wandeuk, Golpe a golpe* (English title: *Wandeuk*) (Changbi) deal with issues of childhood and youth. In other words, spaces that are generally considered safe for people, such as home and school, are set up as the most dangerous places where uncertainty exists, revealing the worst side of people when faced with adversity and testing the protagonist's determination.

\* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 38 – Go to the interview of writer Hwang Sun-Mi  
[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=634&page=&code=interview&total\\_searchkey=%ED%99%A9%EC%84%A0%EB%AF%B8](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?ptype=view&idx=634&page=&code=interview&total_searchkey=%ED%99%A9%EC%84%A0%EB%AF%B8)



Korean covers of *La panadería encantada*, *El niño de la pegatina amarilla*, and *Wandeuk, Golpe a golpe*



Spanish (Mexican) covers of *La panadería encantada*, *El niño de la pegatina amarilla*, and *Wandeuk, Golpe a golpe*

*Como un cuento de hadas* (English title: *Like a Fairytale*) (Minumsa) by Kim Kyung-Wook is a novel about people who have experienced the end of seemingly eternal love and have lost the dream of living a perfect life with their partner. This book features characters who reveal their most human and selfish sides as they search for answers to the question of what true love is. Though in a different genre, Lee Sang-Kwon's fairy tale *El pato*

*que voló al cielo* (English title: *The Duck That Flew to Heaven*) (Woongjin Junior) is another book about the harmony between humans and the environment, where it is easy to forget the importance of the environment. This leaves an emotional, if not joyful, message about human perception of the environment.



Korean covers of *Como un cuento de hadas* and *El pato que voló al cielo*



Spanish (Mexican) covers of *Como un cuento de hadas* and *El pato que voló al cielo*

Like the books above, Korean fiction emphasizes harmony, protecting values, introversion, and internal conflict in every story, no matter the subject. The narrative diversity of Korean fiction, which highlights the country's progress toward a borderless global society, makes it a promising market for the Western publishing market.



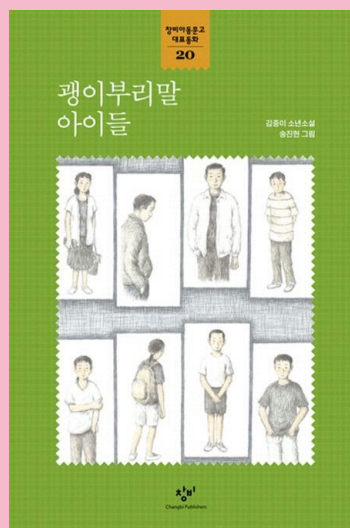
## BOOK TRIP

[Into the Book ①]

# Where the Children from the Book *Children of Kwaeng-I-Bu-Ri Village* Used to Play

Mansuk-dong, Dong-gu, Incheon: Time Travel with the Book

Written by Song Su-Hui



*Children of Kwaeng-I-Bu-Ri Village*

The Kwaeng-i-bu-ri Village is  
the oldest poor neighborhood in Incheon. (...)  
Over the years, the village turned from a forest of pine trees  
into a factory town full of smokestacks and shanty houses.

*Children of Kwaeng-I-Bu-Ri Village* (Changbi Publishers), published in 2000, is a children's book featuring the life of twin sisters Sook-Hee (the main character) and Sook-Ja living in a poor *daldongne* neighborhood. The word "*daldongne*" means a poor village situated on the slopes of a hill in Korea, and it is said to have derived from its proximity to the moon. It is widely known that Kim Jung-Mi, the writer, had once run a study room called "a small school by the railroad" for children from low-income families in the Kwaeng-i-bu-ri Village located in Mansuk-dong, Dong-gu, Incheon, and wrote the book based on the experience. Perhaps because she reflected on her first-hand experience, the book is praised for capturing well the joy and sorrow of the poor. The book became a bestseller after it was selected as the first book in the TV show "Let's Read Books" aired on MBC, which led to the book-reading frenzy in Korea in the early 2000s. In 2013, it became the first children's book to sell more than 2 million copies. Now, what does Kwaeng-i-bu-ri Village look like today, 20 years after the book was first published? Following is a trip to Mansuk-dong, Dong-gu, Incheon, in search of traces of the main characters in the book.

\* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 34 – Go to the interview with writer Kim Jung-Mi  
[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?page=4&code=interview](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/interview.php?page=4&code=interview)



A mural in front of the "small school by the railroad" in the Kwaeng-i-bu-ri Village

### Past and present of the poor *daldongne*

There were a number of big *daldongnes* in Mansuk-dong, Donggu, Incheon. The region was the home to people with low incomes, including the Kwaeng-i-bu-ri Village, the background of the book *Children of Kwaeng-I-Bu-Ri Village*. The village grew as the habitat for thousands of people throughout Korea's modern history, but currently, the size has been cut down significantly due to the community's disintegration and gentrification as the country went through the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 and successive redevelopment plans since the 2000s. The majority of the residents living in the village today are seniors, and it has become difficult to find children playing around in the village as less than 10 children and adolescents are living there.





A mural on the sound barrier installed along the Wonkwaengiburi Street

It is indeed hard to find traces of the original Kwaeng-i-bu-ri Village, but don't give up yet if you are thinking of traveling to the village – the village has renovated parts of the neighborhood to welcome visitors. On the site of the “North Coast Line” railroad, which appears in the conversation between Sook-Ja and her father in the book, you will see the “Wonkwaengiburi Street.” The word “Wonkwaengiburi” is the name affectionately used by the villagers, meaning “the region which was called the Kwaengiburi Village from the beginning” in Korean. As soon as you enter



the specialty street, you will be greeted by colorful railroad tracks, trains, and pictures of landscapes. Instead of completely demolishing the neighborhood, the dark and potentially desolate shanty town streets were painted and tidied up to create a clean, yet nostalgic place.

Apart from Wonkwaengiburi Street, the murals drawn in parts of the Kwaeng-i-bu-ri Village have turned the region into a more vibrant place than before. Abandoned houses have been transformed into small but compact art museums. Also, the “Woori Art Museum” run in two buildings – an exhibition hall and the educational hall – exhibits works by young and talented authors in Korea, providing authors a chance to open their own exhibition, and is a cultural hub for the residents. The museum opens themed exhibitions every certain period displaying different artworks, and you can enjoy pictures by artist Choi Bit-na from July 4 to August 20 on the theme of “chunks.” As the educational hall sometimes exhibits works by the villagers, it will be a great experience to stop by the place and appreciate different themed exhibitions if you visit Kwaeng-i-bu-ri Village.

A short walk out of Kwaeng-i-bu-ri Village will take you to “Hwadojin Park,” a park with beautiful flowers. The park was formerly a stronghold called “Hwadojin,” where the army used to station in the late Joseon Dynasty. And this is where the characters in the book *Children of Kwaeng-I-Bu-Ri Village* pick up empty bottles to make money. Hwadojin Park offers not only a wide walking path for residents to relax, but also a recreation of

a stronghold to give you a sense of the atmosphere of Hwadojin during the late Joseon Dynasty, and an exhibition hall with military equipment and weapons from the late Joseon Dynasty.



The entrance of the exhibition hall of Woori Art Museum and artist Choi Bit-na's themed exhibition "Chunks"



The walkway in Hwadojin Park and the Hwadojin exhibition

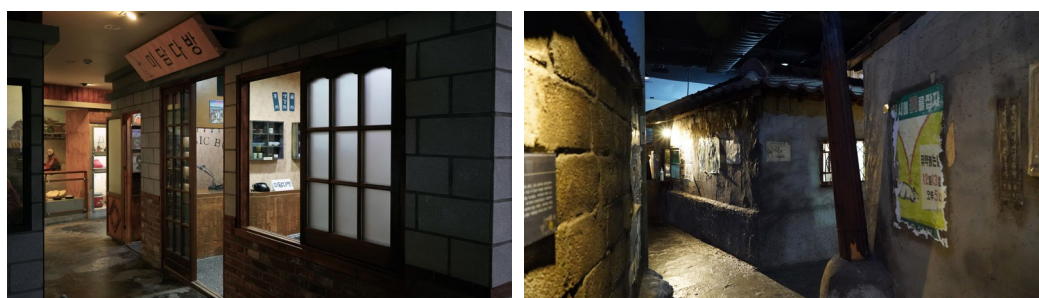
The cement blocks crumbled down from Dong-Joon's house,  
the only house left in the empty site, (...)  
and the planked attic was severely sunken on the left side,  
making it look like the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

## Landscapes from the past that give you a deeper understanding of the book

If you want to see the *daldongne* where the characters from the book *Children of Kwaeng-I-Bu-Ri Village* used to live with your own eyes and have a deeper understanding of the book, why not visit Sudoguksan Museum of Housing and Living near the village? (*Sudoguksan* means waterworks mountain in Korean) The museum, built on the site where the *daldongne* used to be, is characterized by a two-story building with one floor and one basement that represents the scenery of that time without any alterations. The exhibition room on the first floor is themed around the scenery of Dongincheon in the 1960s and 1970s, and displays shops that actually existed alongside products from that time. You can also have your picture taken in a Korean school uniform from the 1970s. The basement exhibition room is an authentic reconstruction of what *daldongne* looked like at the time. The shacks were brought back from the site when *daldongne* was demolished, so you can feel like you've traveled back in time. Walking through the tightly packed houses and narrow alleys, you can easily imagine the characters living in *daldongne*.



Sudoguksan Museum of Housing and Living



The exhibition room on the first floor on the theme of Dongincheon from the 1960s and 70s, and the exhibition room on the basement floor on the theme of daldongne

The old-fashioned scenery continues as you head out of Dongincheon City. In particular, Memories Mirim Theater, which has been with the residents for over 60 years, and Baedari Secondhand Bookstore Alley, which was made famous by the drama “Guardian: The Lonely and Great God,” are stalwarts of the area long before the background setting of the book *Children of Kwaeng-I-Bu-Ri Village*. Imagine the characters in the book wandering around the secondhand bookstores and the theater. You too might be lucky enough to come across a used



book waiting for a new owner or find your favorite classic or independent film.



The Memories Mirim Theater and the Baedari Secondhand Bookstore Alley

The redevelopment of Manseok-dong, the area where the village is located, has caused many people to leave the neighborhood. While the “small school by the railroad” moved three times due to safety issues, the first building of the school, which was the background for the book *Children of Kwaeng-I-Bu-Ri Village*, was also demolished during the redevelopment project of the village. Like this, the Manseok-dong neighborhood has been undergoing a series of changes, leaving behind traces of the people who left. So, before they disappear into a few sentences in a book, why don't you walk through Manseok-dong with the book and collect the traces of the village you can find today?

## ONE-LINER QUOTES

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### Radio DJ's Pick

Written by Lee Hyun-Gyung (Newscaster at SBS)

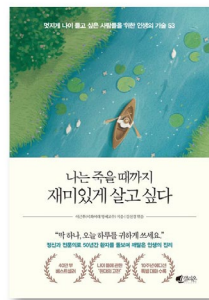
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Lee Hyun-Gyung is a newscaster at SBS, a radio PD and DJ, a sports-caster, and an MC on a TV program. She is also working as an essay writer, publishing three books such as *Feeling Like Nothing* (Needlebook), *What Do You Think About at Dawn, When Everyone's Asleep?* (Bookisbab), and *Little Happiness in My Life* (Gipennamu).

The primary audience of the radio program “Lee Hyun-Gyung’s Musictopia,” in which I’m taking part as a DJ and producer, are those awake late at night. People who are emotionally hurt by others, fight with their husband or wife, have trouble communicating with their children, and feel bad for their parents for not making contact often, turn on the radio. Then, they share their stories about regretting the past, worrying



about the present, and being anxious about the future, through text messages or the online bulletin board. As I am living a not-so-different life from them, I get to nod my head as I read their stories. There, I try to be in the shoes of those in pain by sharing my story or cases of people around me that I have heard sometime. I occasionally quote phrases from books that I find impressive as well.



*I Want to Have Fun 'til the Day I Die*  
Lee Geun-Hu, Woongjin ThinkBig

No matter how tough our lives are,  
there are moments that make us  
laugh and feel joy.



Some days ago, I read a part from the book *I Want to Have Fun 'til the Day I Die* (Woongjin ThinkBig) (special edition to commemorate 400k copies sold) to a person who said that it's sad to lose memory, physical strength, passion, and energy with age. The book's writer, who is living with 7 types of diseases, including diabetes, high blood pressure, and coronary stenosis after completely losing vision in his left eye 20 years ago, once said about aging, "What's good about getting old? Nothing. But as everyone on earth gets old, it is a course of life that you must accept. It's much more important to have the mindset that you

want to do good things and have fun, rather than looking for the good part of aging.”

Writer Lee Geun-Hu, 89 years old, was born in 1935 during the Japanese occupation of Korea. The Korean War in 1950 made life difficult, and his participation in the April Revolution (a democratic movement against government corruption that occurred on April 19, 1960) and the May 16 Coup (an uprising by military officers on May 16, 1961) made it hard for him to get a job and support his life. However, he soon realized that he had to be thankful for the fact that he was alive after going through several moments of life or death.

When he was working as a psychiatrist, he changed closed psychiatric wards into open wards for the first time in Korea. He was also the first person to bring in psychodrama as a treatment for mental diseases. Despite the hectic schedule, he has been doing medical volunteering for 40 years in Nepal and 56 years at an orphanage. He also holds the record for being the oldest summa cum laude graduate of Korea Cyber University at the age of 76. Today, even though he can only see in silhouette in his right eye, he wrote in his book that he is still grateful to be able to wake up every day.

That said, people who enjoy their lives are not those who only do things they want to do. It's those that do what needs to be done, no matter how difficult the situation can be. So, I shared my feelings with my listeners, reminding them that life can be enriched by the accumulation of moments.



*Sky, Wind, and Stars*  
Yoon Dong-Ju, Yonsei University Press



It's a shame  
that poems are written so easily like this,  
while they say that life is hard to live.  
- from *A Poem Written Easily*

I recommended reading *Good Enough Parent* (Korea Economic Daily), written by psychologist couple Kim Jin-Young and Ko Young-Jin, to one of my listeners who said that she fell in shock after hearing curse words from her son as she scolded him for playing games too long. According to the book, writing a short thank-you letter for the child helps start a conversation. Of course, the letter does not solve the problem right away. It's not that it makes them have a dramatic reconciliation. It's also hard to write a thank-you letter for the child as a parent, which is usually written in the opposite direction. It's harder than you might think to show your adolescent child gratitude for their presence instead of admonishment and demands. However, I shared the book because I thought it would be a great opportunity for couples to become parents and show their sincerity to their children, who are the compass of their lives. I didn't begin reading books to reply to each of my listeners' stories, but whenever I hear a sad story, the phrases from my previous readings come to mind and naturally flow into

the microphone. I sometimes receive comments that it was encouraging and gave them strength. There, I reply, “No, I thank YOU.” I jokingly tell my listeners, “Let’s have fun and live a long life as we are good enough as ourselves.” My recent life goal is “well-being for well-dying.” I want to live my finite life with people that I love and care for, instead of being alone. That’s also why I never lose interest in my listeners’ stories and keep reading books.

## KOREAN PUBLISHERS

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### Dasan Contents Group (Dasan Books)

Sharing the Joy of Story with the Entire Human Race

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**Dasan Books**

The symbol of Dasan Books and its Korean and English logos

Since its establishment in 2004 as a publisher of business and self-help books, Dasan Books has grown rapidly based on its strong trust with authors, cooperation with various departments such as planning, marketing, and public relations, as well as its robust experience in turning many quality books into bestsellers. Not satisfied with its achievements, it is now expanding the scope of its challenges from paperback books to digital content

and new media under various brands, including Dasan Books as Dasan Contents Group. Here's a brief interview with Dasan Contents Group, which is working hard to deliver "easy, deep, and entertaining" information to readers in order to "share the joy of stories" with the entire human race.

It's an honor to have you with us for this interview. Please introduce Dasan Contents Group and Dasan Books to our international readers.

Named after the pen name of Dasan Jeong Yak-Yong, Dasan Books is a publisher that reproduces his love for the people and the values of empirical tradition through various content, including books. We are currently growing into a "Dasan Content Group" by challenging various content businesses such as digital content, entertainment, education, and new media, as well as publishing.

Next year will be the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Dasan Books. Over the past 20 years, Dasan Books has become one of the top 10 publishing houses in Korea, and has grown into Dasan Contents Group, ceaselessly producing high-quality books and content. So, what are the reasons and drivers behind such rapid growth?

Dasan Books' mission is "the joy of story," which literally means to share the joy of story with the entire human race. As we tried to design books in line with this mission, we naturally got to



publish fine books, which eventually helped us to grow fast. We have always put the focus on identifying the most needed content for the readers of the time and making “difficult things easier, easy things more profound, and profound things more interesting.” And such content sometimes gives knowledge to readers, sometimes enlightens them with wisdom, and sometimes provides entertainment.

To make fun and happy books, we start mulling over what we can provide to our readers from the planning stage of each book. We think about what help (be it knowledge, wisdom, and entertainment) we can give to our readers, and if the book does not fit into any of the three criteria, we don't publish it. We believe that the mission to publish books helpful for our readers is the driving force behind our rapid growth.

*The  
joy of  
story*

The mission of Dasan Books: The Joy of Story

It was impressive to see the detailed explanation of the book-publishing process and support for authors on your official website. Also, Dasan Books is famous for its transparent management of royalties through a separate royalty program. How does this kind of open information help book production?

There's a clear reason for sharing detailed information about how we produce books and support authors on our website: there are many to-be authors that submit their works through the website, and they are valuable, potential partners of Dasan Contents Group. Dasan Contents Group is not a company that only cares about readers. Readers are important, of course, but we believe that our staff members and authors are also crucial partners that grow together with the group.

The royalty program was designed to innovate the tradition in the Korean publishing industry that does not provide accurate information about the number of copies sold. Dasan Books makes sure that all the authors that have signed a royalty contract with us have access to their contract information, royalty payment history, and the actual sales information of their book. We believe that this program helped many authors have trust in us. And maybe this is why we receive so many manuscripts from authors.

It's widely known that the company prioritizes cooperation between departments such as editing, design, and marketing, as well as between authors. Is there a reason for prioritizing the communication and cooperation between departments?

Dasan Contents Group has three departments - editing, sales (marketing), and public relations - that work together like cogs in a machine. From the planning stage, where we decide which item to choose for the book, the sales team (marketing team for Dasan Books) and the PR team (media promotion team for Dasan Books) come together and share their ideas. Once an item passes the meeting, we move on to the concept meeting, where we design the concept of the book, and the two teams participate in the meeting again. So, the entire process of producing a book is not solely led by the editing team – it is joined by the sales and the PR team. After the publication, the editing team actively participates in marketing and PR. All publishing houses value inter-department cooperation, but Dasan Books' cooperation is on another level.

Another reason that we stress the importance of inter-department cooperation is that it is no longer an era where good books sell themselves. Quality books are important indeed, but without good marketing and promotion, they cannot reach out to more readers.

The company has been expanding its IP (Intellectual Property) into various fields, such as webtoons and webnovels, on top of paper books. What was the background of such a business expansion, and what were the achievements?

Dasan Books has been steadily making various attempts in the digital content business. We installed a special department in 2014 and advanced into the webnovel sector in 2016. We have published more than 600 titles until today. We have been making our way in the webtoon industry since 2019, and currently, we are serializing or producing 20 titles. All of Dasan Books' webtoons target the global market, and many are translated and exported. More than 80 of our major works, such as *The Stairway of Time*, *It Was All a Mistake*, and *I Wasn't the Cinderella*, were exported to 9 countries, and serviced in different languages across the world.

Apart from this, we have been producing various K-pop music pieces based on our webtoons and servicing them in the global market. The song "In the Novel," inserted in the webtoon *It Was All a Mistake* sung by Minnie from K-pop group (G)I-DLE early this year, became a hit on music charts in Korea and abroad, and went viral on video platforms such as TikTok and Bilibili through dance challenges, receiving an enthusiastic response from global fans. Also, 10 songs written and produced based on the webtoons' world view, including "Not Cinderella" sung by YUQI from (G)I-DLE, "Goodbye" sung by Ryeowook from Super

Junior, “At the End of Time” sung by Eunha from Viviz, and “Last Trip” sung by Kim Namjoo from Apink, received much love from global fans.



*The Stairway of Time, It Was All a Mistake, and I Wasn't the Cinderella*

You are publishing books through various brands. Can you introduce to us some of your unique brands?

The most representative brand is “Dasan Books.” It mainly publishes business and self-help books, including translated books like *Sanctuary Books* and *Life Leverage*, as well as Korean books like *Wealthiking* and *The Moment When Studying Becomes Fun* which became steady-sellers. Another brand “Dasanchackbang” mainly publishes fiction and non-fiction, and the representative books are the *Land* series (20 volumes) by Pak Kyeong-Ni, which is regarded as one the best Korean fiction works. Other bestsellers include *Deokyeongju* and *A Man Called Ove* (translated books).

Also, the brand “Nole” publishes adolescent fiction. Its best books include translated books such as *River Boy* and *How to Steal a Dog*, as well as Korean books such as *I’m Glad to Live Like Bonobono*. The brand “Dasanchodang” publishes humanities books, and its best books include translated book *Habitus* and Korean books such as *I May be Wrong*, *Use of History*, and *When I Don’t Know What I Really Want*.



Dasan Books' *Wealthinking* and *The Moment When Studying Becomes Fun*, and Dasanchodang's *Deokyeongju* and the *Land* series



Nole's *I'm Glad to Live Like Bonobono*, Dasanchodang's *I May be Wrong*, *Use of History*, and *When I Don't Know What I Really Want*



Dasan Contents Group is also famous for its excellent marketing strategy. Is there an interesting marketing channel that you want to recommend to our readers?

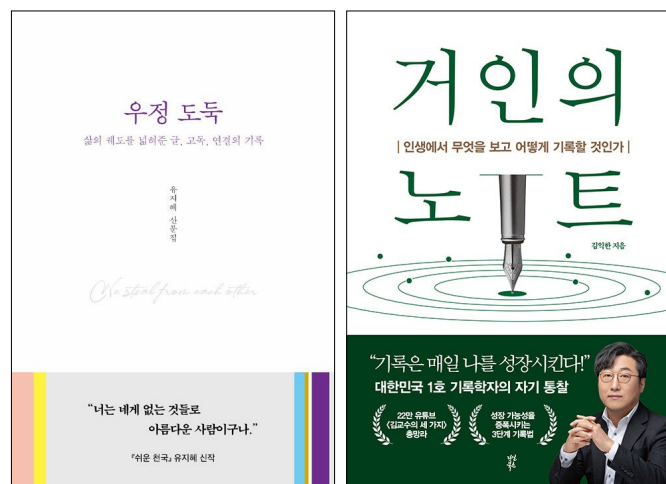
The major marketing channel of Korean publishers these days is YouTube. We also had many cases where books introduced on several YouTube channels became bestsellers. Yet, this is all thanks to the YouTube channels' power, rather than them being our own unique marketing channel.

The marketing channels we own are "Bookspirit ([v.daum.net/channel/3458/home](https://v.daum.net/channel/3458/home))" and "Books 612 ([v.daum.net/channel/3161/home](https://v.daum.net/channel/3161/home))." These two are run on "Content View," serviced on Daum, a portal site operated by Kakao. They turn books into the format of comics, making readers feel as if they are reading a webtoon while they are actually reading a book. The content produced in this channel has actually helped so many books go bestsellers. By the way, there's a popular YouTube channel that we run as well, which is called "Smartmandoo ([www.youtube.com/channel/UC1-lwASmWqqU1V\\_WLNIRALw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1-lwASmWqqU1V_WLNIRALw))." Here again, we had the experience of introducing a book and getting a good response from readers.

Is there a book published by Dasan Contents Group that you want to recommend to our international readers?

First, we would like to recommend reading *We Steal From Each Other*, an essay by Yoo Ji-Hye. Writer Yoo is a standout essayist, who has been strongly supported by female readers in their 20s and 30s through the mail-subscription service named “Yoo Ji-Hye Paper.” The book *We Steal From Each Other* is a more balanced story that the author herself calls a turning point. It would be great to have the opportunity to share Yoo’s sensitivity with international readers.

Another book we would like to recommend is *The Master’s Note* by Kim Ik-Han. Writer Kim is the first archivist in Korea, and his book explains the importance of records and how to apply them. This book was especially loved by people of all ages and genders, and we think it can be loved across borders.



*We Steal From Each Other* and *The Master's Note*

We look forward to Dasan Contents Group's next moves. What are your future plans or goals?

Dasan Books and Dasan Contents Group aim to become the best publishing brand in Korea by 2024, the best knowledge service company in Korea by 2034, and the best knowledge service brand in the world by 2044. To accomplish these big dreams, we'll keep one mission in mind: the joy of story.

## KOREAN AUTHORS

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### Writer Lim Kyoung-Sun

A Figure of Diligence who Shifts Between Emotion and Reason

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Writing for 19 years and publishing 20 books, Lim Kyoung-Sun is a sincere and genuine writer. She has recently published *Living as Myself* (Maumsanchaek). She spent her childhood in several countries, and she used to be an office worker for 12 years before she decided to become a full-time writer. Writer Lim has been writing candidly about work, love, human relationships, and attitudes toward life based on her experience. While she releases novels and essays alternately and interacts with her readers in a sometimes emotional and sometimes rational manner, following is an interview about her story of being a writer who never stops writing new works, just like her daily running routine that has been kept for 4 years.



It's an honor to have you with us on *K-Book Trends*. Please introduce yourself to our readers.

Hello, everyone. I'm a Korean writer of novels and essays. As I spent my childhood in a number of countries around the world, I feel nostalgic about introducing myself in English.

You recently released a book. What kind of book is it?

The book *Living as Myself* is a deeply reflective essay about staying centered as you age, sustainable writing and being a writer, and the choices you make to create a life that is your own. I felt that all three of these topics were essential to maintaining your unique color in the rapidly changing environment.



The cover and introductory image of the book *Living as Myself*

The photo of you wearing sneakers in the introductory image catches our eyes. You seem to enjoy running. So, what does running mean to you?

I began running outside at night to feel freedom when the pandemic hit. Running became a daily routine for me over the past 4 years. I think I realized why many writers, including Haruki Murakami, run as a hobby. Running is the most effective cardio exercise to facilitate your brain. Not only that, for me, it's a time when I can be completely alone and quiet with my music and be as emotional as I want to be, which keeps me mindful. Running gives me the sense of being completely alone, free, and alive.

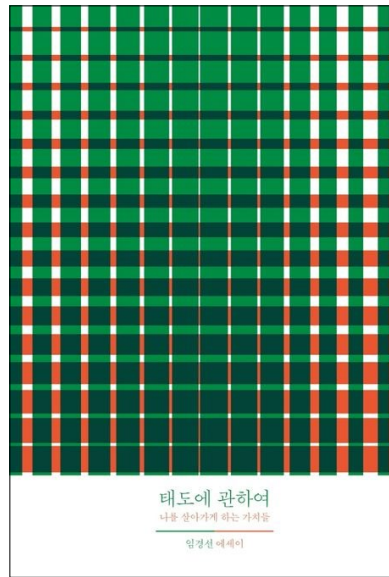


You have been writing for 19 years now, and you have published more than 20 books. That's more than one book a year. What was the driver behind such diligence?

I worked for a large company for 12 years before I became a full-time writer in 2005. I'd gotten used to working at a set time every day, and I felt like I had to be as committed to my writing as I was to my job. I didn't write as a hobby but for a living. And I had to keep writing and publishing to make ends meet.

Your essay *On Attitude* (Hankyoreh Publishing Company), published in 2015, is a steady-seller that sold over 180 thousand copies and is picked as your representative book. You have released its revised edition as well as a special edition. So, is there any change in your "attitude" from when you first published to now?

In the book *On Attitude*, I talked about the five attitudes that I regard as the most important in life: spontaneity, generosity, honesty, diligence, and fairness. Nothing has changed in the basic idea that those five attitudes are the main pillars of life, and that together they ultimately lead to the pursuit of "freedom." I'm a very consistent person. But yet, the book's revised edition contains more stories about how "fairness" changes in my family and how I felt about life as I watched my father pass away.



*On Attitude*

While you have mainly written essays, you have released six novels as well. While essays and novels are categorized under the larger genre of literature, you must have different mindsets when writing them. What are the commonalities and differences in your mindset when writing an essay and a novel?

Writing a novel and writing an essay seems to use different muscles, like using your left and right brain. I feel like I get more emotional and honest when I write a novel, and more rational when I write an essay. My essays vary in tone from the emotional to the rational, but my novels tend to be more emotionally vulnerable as they deal with love and deep relationships between people, and I find happiness in talking about such sad and beautiful complexities of humanity.

Your book *When I Fall in Love with Mom* (Maumsanchaek) underwent a makeover through the re-cover project “Again, This Book” at the 2023 Seoul International Book Fair (SIBF) held in June. The readers must have felt refreshed by the book’s new cover, but you must have felt something different as well. How did you feel about the new cover?

Well, above all, I can’t believe that 11 years have passed since 2012, when the book was first published. I’m thankful for the love that the readers gave the book, too. Unlike the original book cover that featured a photo of me and my child, the new cover has plants growing, reaching out energetically. And that gives off a fresh, healthy vibe. Besides, we are all growing up, reaching out somewhere.



The initial cover and re-covered cover of the book *When I Fall in Love with Mom*

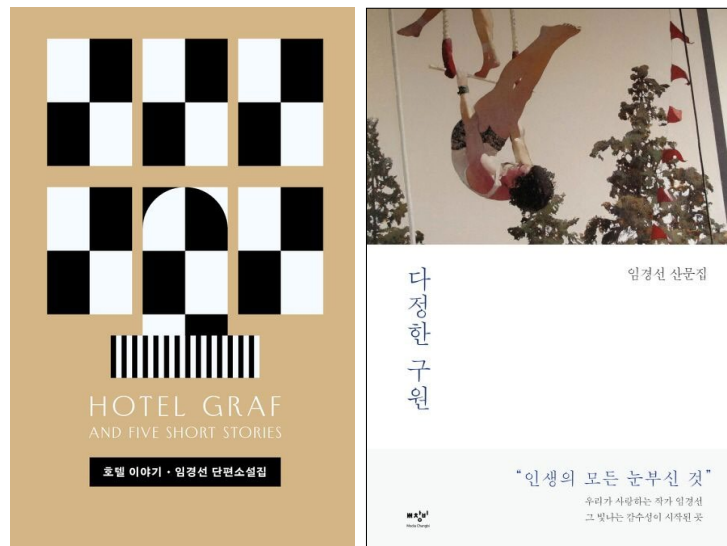
You gave a lecture at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan, in May. You spoke in Japanese, too. What inspired you to give a lecture in Japan, and what was it like to be meeting readers in another country?

Being the first Korean to give a talk at the “Haruki Murakami Library” - which is like his sanctuary to me as he is my literary mentor - was a great honor and an inspiring event for me. When I could finally set foot in Japan after the end of the pandemic, I thought of going to the place first, but unfortunately, the library was closed due to the college entrance exam. But as I talked to the staff member at the library about it, she (a Ph.D. at the University of Tokyo, majoring in the literature of Haruki Murakami) told me that she read a translated book of mine, and gave me permission to enter the library. She even suggested that I give a lecture there. So, on May 19, the day of my lecture, so many readers came to the hall at the Haruki Murakami Library, thankfully, and I was so happy to see Mr. Terajima there, who was the editor in charge of Haruki Murakami’s latest novel *The City and Its Uncertain Walls*.

We heard that you spent your childhood in a number of countries, such as Japan, the US, Portugal, and Brazil. It must have affected your writing. Is there a book of yours that international readers might relate to?

I recommend reading *Hotel Graf and Five Short Stories* (Toast), my latest novel. With the event taking place in a classic hotel

that is about to shut down, the book is a short-story collection featuring the story of the guests and the staff members. The issue of how to deal with parting with familiar beings and the changes it brings, is a universal topic that we all face in this era, regardless of our nationality. I also recommend reading *At Lisbon* (Media Changbi), an essay about my trip to Lisbon in honor of my father, who passed away in 2018. I lived in Lisbon for a year with my father when I was 10 years old, and the trip to Lisbon to honor him was with my daughter, who was 10 years old, just like myself and my father back in the day. So, the book is a story about loss and regeneration, and talks about the love and pain that family gives.



*Hotel Graf and Five Short Stories and At Lisbon*

We look forward to your next works as you are a writer that never stops going forward, traveling across the boundary of fiction and non-fiction with various topics. What are your future plans or goals?

As I published an essay recently, I think it's time to write a novel. I write fiction and essays alternately, and I'm currently working on a full-length novel that delves deeply into the nature of love and life. I'm sure that we all have been in a crazy, toxic love affair at one point or another!



## PUBLISHING INDUSTRY

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# Today and Future of Korean Digital Publishing

Written by Cho Yoon-Jung  
(Executive director at the Korea Digital Publishing Cooperation)

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Growth and expansion of digital publishing



Usage of e-book platforms is on the rise



AI digital textbook project is in progress

The COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020 has also brought about major changes in the digital publishing industry. Most importantly, it accelerated the AI digital textbook project, which nobody knew when it would gain a boost. It was also the trigger that facilitated digital transformation and digital convergence in

the publishing industry.

The digital publishing industry in Korea has been developing for the past decade through continuous transformations. The iBooks Store - an e-book distribution market launched by Apple and Amazon Kindle - Amazon's self-publishing service opened a full-fledged e-book publishing market in Korea. Many digital publishing start-ups joined the industry. There, major issues in the publishing industry were "self-publishing" and "multimedia app book." However, over 10 years until now, the two issues have evolved in an unexpected direction in Korea.

Regarding self-publishing, unlike the expectation that there will be more single-person e-book publishers and single-person publishers, it gave birth to many creators (individual writers instead of companies). Until then, publishing a paper book in Korea through a publishing house had been very difficult. So, it was hard for creators to actually have their works go through a publishing house and sign a contract for publication. Also, getting recognized in the publishing world was hard without winning a few major literary contests. However, as publishing became easier through digital publishing, many new writers with fresh stories, distinct characteristics, and philosophies could advance into the market. Unconventional stories and writing that defy traditional conventions and standards have created a new resonance in the marketplace, stimulating the paperback publishing market.

The representative platform is Brunch Book, run by Brunch.

Brunch Book opened the door to people who want to write spontaneously and freely, by providing a different writing environment from traditional editors and paper book publishers. Today, the platform has become a must-visit website for paper book publishers to discover new aspiring writers. There were even cases in which writers who published an e-book on Brunch Book were picked up by paper book publishers and had their book published physically.



The logo of Brunch

So, while it is true that self-publishing has facilitated single-person e-book publishing, it has played a role as a new content supplier for existing publishers rather than expanding single-person e-book publishers. And this pattern has only grown and solidified since the COVID-19 pandemic. Stable, well-capitalized, mid-to-large-sized publishers that had previously focused exclusively on paperbacks began to launch e-books in earnest as they went through the pandemic. In addition to converting existing books to e-books, publishers also tried to change the distribution of new books by releasing them simultaneously in print and e-book formats, or by releasing them as e-books with only a week to ten days of hold back (the period between the release on the first platform and the release on the second

platform). This approach has worked very well in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, with e-books boosting sales for publishers. In addition, as the pandemic has forced all sectors to remain intact, work from home and various platforms such as Zoom meetings over the internet have taken hold. Different ways of consuming content and communication based on laptops, mobile devices, and tablet PCs have also taken root. This has led to a dramatic increase in the usage of e-book platforms and the rapid spread of e-book consumption. This increased the desire of readers to read their favorite books in paperback, which in turn increases book consumption, as readers who read e-books first also buy paperbacks.

The webtoon and webnovel markets, which are a part of digital publishing, also went through major changes throughout the pandemic. Small to medium-sized webtoon and webnovel companies have seen a dramatic increase in sales, prompting them to make bold attempts to scale up. Some sold their companies to tech firms such as Kakao and Naver for a high price, or they received venture capital (VC) investment and expanded their companies into various genres utilizing their original IP (Intellectual Property) such as movies, videos, and games. Now, “Series A – Series B – Exit”<sup>\*</sup> has become a common term in webtoon and webnovel companies.

<sup>\*</sup> Series A: The phase where you receive investments to officially launch the service. Series B: The phase where you expand the business based on the recognition from Series A. Exit: The phase where the investors sell the shares they received from the startup and recoup their investment.

Meanwhile, e-book subscription platforms like Millie, have allayed initial fears and concerns during the pandemic and have seen significant sales growth, helping to solidify the subscription revenue model in the e-book market. It also made a big splash in the market with bold new businesses such as chat books and audiobooks. The company was later acquired by KT.



The logo of Millie

However, the pandemic has not only positively impacted the digital publishing market. During this period, small and medium-sized publishers or single-person publishing houses that had been producing in small batches actually saw their sales decline, and many of their hard-working creators moved to larger publishing houses with more capital and marketing power, causing them to struggle with the supply of content. In addition, as large publishers have been pushing their content into the e-book market, many small publishers have been absorbed by larger publishers or closed their doors due to business difficulties. As a result, the market for e-books has become increasingly dominated by large publishers, which has led to polarization.

Therefore, the digital publishing market is now dominated by

medium and large paperback-based publishers and large e-book platforms such as Kyobo Books, Aladdin, Yes24, Lidibooks, Kakao, and Naver, rather than the single-person e-book publishers and small platforms that led the e-book market in the early days. This trend is likely to continue in the future. Another big topic that will be important to the e-book market in the future is AI, or artificial intelligence. E-book content and e-book platforms utilizing various AI technologies are expected to drive the e-book publishing market.

In June this year, Korea's Ministry of Education announced that AI digital textbooks will be distributed as a mandate starting in 2025. Paper and AI digital textbooks will now be distributed to elementary, middle, and high schools. It means that children will be meeting e-books from their birth. They will naturally tap into devices and read various e-books without limitation. All the exams will turn online in the future. In such a world, children will likely think of e-books first when they are told to think of books rather than paper books. So, sooner or later, the publishing industry will have to face the fact that e-books are not an option, but a necessity. But, the question is, is our publishing ecosystem ready for it with appropriate know-how?

The Education Ministry's AI digital textbook project takes the form of paper book publishers and edu-tech firms with digital publishing know-how participating as a consortium, doing R&D and supplying textbooks together. Publishers that have been in the textbook business for a long time are already signing



agreements with edu-tech companies and receiving investments, jumping into the AI digital textbook project. I expect this AI digital textbook project to be a beautiful collaboration between publishers who have long produced quality paperback textbooks and edu-tech companies with digital technology. By working together, publishers will learn about instructional design and various digital publishing technologies, and edu-tech companies will learn about the textbook production process of publishers with more than half a century of know-how.

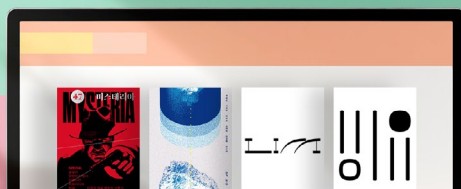
I think this will have a huge impact on the entire publishing content industry beyond the textbook market. Companies, creators, and distributors will lead the publishing market in the future with visions to think, produce, and invest in both paper and e-books. This wonderful cooperation will continue, leading to the expansion of the global market, which is the goal of the publishing industry. The publishing industry will become a future-oriented industry, instead of being a declining or stagnant industry, through the growth and expansion of the digital publishing market. Also, it will be the most important and central industry with the oldest, the most original, and the best quality content among the many cultural contents. Again, I would like to emphasize that the future of publishing lies along that path, and I hope that all of us publishers will be part of that beautiful journey.

## Publishing Policy

# Korean Literary Magazines and Literary Webzines

The fastest way to catch  
the latest trend in Korean literature!

## Korean Literary Magazines and Literary Webzines



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Korean literature has been evolving  
with the changing times,  
making fresh and creative efforts.

**Do you want to learn about  
the latest trends  
in Korean literature?**



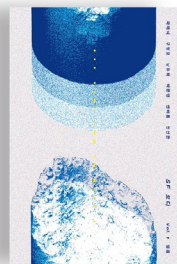
From the latest titles by distinctive authors  
to works about profound topics,

- **following is an introduction to unique literary magazines and webzines in Korea, that capture the "present" moments of Korean literature!**



### A mystery magazine: *Mysteria*

- A bimonthly magazine that expands the mystery genre
- Introduces short stories written by mystery authors from home and abroad
- Publishes articles for readers to enjoy a broad range of the mystery genre



### An SF anthology series: *SF Boda*

- SF magazine published twice a year
- Includes works featuring in-depth SF topics
- Timeless subjects and boundless world of SF



### A fiction magazine that captures the times: *Gutnit*

- A magazine that turns social issues into fiction
- Contains a short essay and three short pieces of fiction on each issue's theme
- Covers works by writers, whether or not they have made their official debut



webzinelim.com

### A literary webzine for young writers: *LIM*

- Serializes new works daily, including short stories and essays
- A new platform free from genre or style
- Publishes two short story collections a year, compiling selected works



view.sfac.or.kr

### A literary magazine in my hand: *View*

- A monthly literary webzine issued by the Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture (SFAC)
- A platform to enjoy Korean literature whenever, wherever you are
- Suggests fresh perspectives and ways to understand literature



Stay tuned for more Korean  
literary magazines and webzines

full of new works that  
have never been  
published elsewhere  
in the world!

## Let's Try

## An Offbeat Trip to Jeju Island

### Event

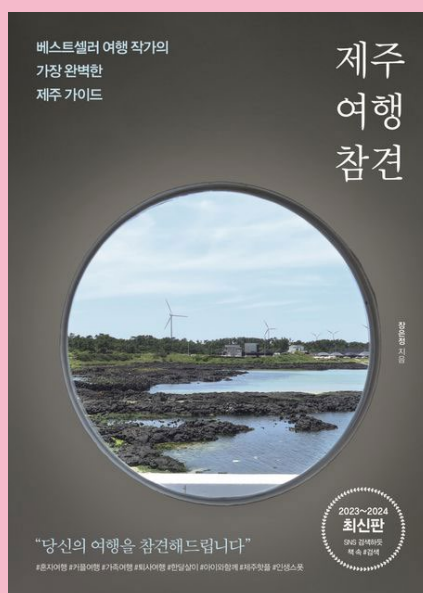
Let's Try introduces various useful, practical books published in Korea every month.

Also, don't miss gift events related to the introduced books!

Simply click on the link below and make an entry to the event! Let's Try!

### *The Best Jeju Trip*

- Written by Jang Eun-Jung, published by Vitabooks





## Take a trip to Jeju Island like no other!



Jeju Island is one of Korea's most popular tourist destinations for its splendid natural scenery and various things to enjoy. *The Best Jeju Trip* is a travel guide for travelers to find the newest information about the island more easily and conveniently. It is a compact guide featuring all the travel spots the writer has

curated, covering various themes like the Jeju ocean, mountains, exhibitions, and experience programs. What's more, it also recommends various unique cafes, nice photo spots for pretty photos, and must-go restaurants, for its readers to have a more abundant travel experience. The map and index included to sort destinations by region and theme make the book more useful. The book also shares the know-how of writer Jang Eun-Jung, who has been a travel writer for 13 years. From pre-departure preparations to travel essentials and the best apps to use while traveling, there's a lot of information you don't want to miss. So, if you are considering traveling to Jeju Island, fill out your itinerary with *The Best Jeju Trip*!

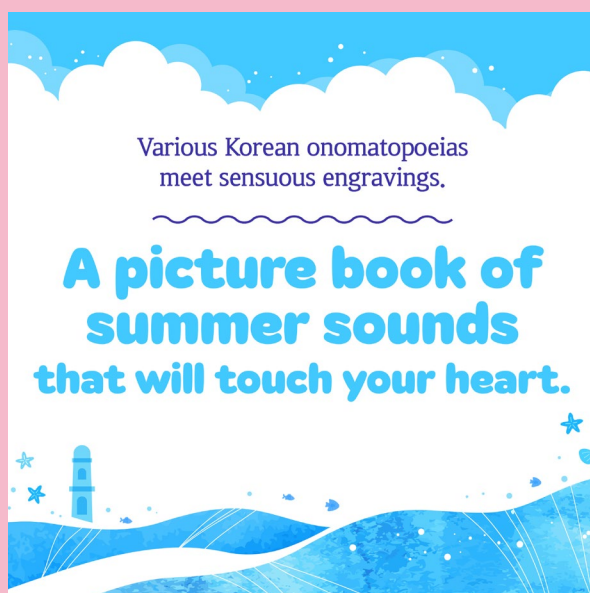
[Go To Article](#)

[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/info.php?ptype=view&idx=1247&code=info&category=92](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/info.php?ptype=view&idx=1247&code=info&category=92)

## NEW BOOKS

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### The Sound of Summer







**Todok, todok-todok,  
todok, todok-todok**

The sound of falling raindrops.  
The sound of the start of the rainy season.



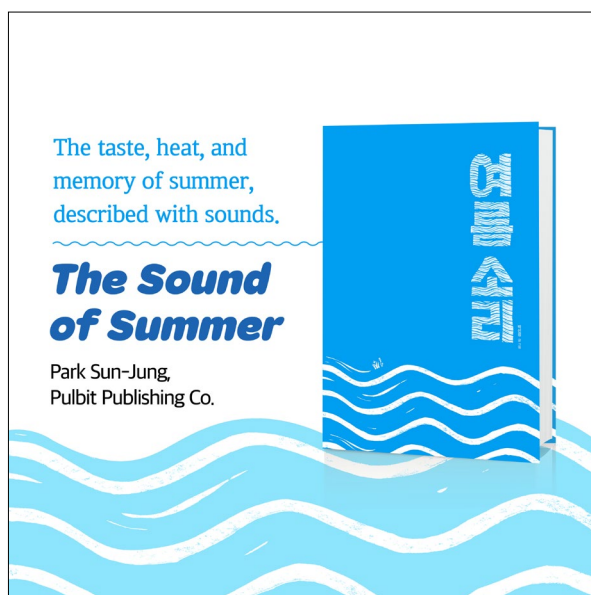
**Swaaaaaa**

The sound of heavy rain.  
The sound of rain  
pouring down from the hole in the sky.



**Clear, cool sounds  
of summer!**

Keep summer memories  
in your heart as you listen to  
the many sounds of summer!



\* [www.youtube.com/watch?v=4h0a\\_u-isk4&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4h0a_u-isk4&feature=youtu.be)



## BEST SELLERS

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### 3rd Week, July 2023

Best Seller Trends in the Four Biggest Online Bookstores in Korea

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In July, books about famous Koreans becoming popular across the world became best sellers. For example, the book *Beyond the Story*, ranked 3rd on the best sellers list, was published to mark the 10th year since the debut of BTS, a famous K-pop idol group worldwide. It features the group's activities and behind stories with in-depth reports and interviews. Also, the book *National Star Lim Young-Woong and the Historical Syndrome* analyzes singer Lim Young-Woong, who became a “national star” after winning in a trot (a genre of Korean music, inspired by the country's folk songs) audition program. Writer Ha Jae-Keun - a literary critic and his fan – investigates the factors behind Lim's popularity in an entertaining way. Meanwhile, a book about a popular “animal” could be seen among the best sellers. For example, *Baby Panda Pubao* is a photo essay that records the life of Panda Pubao, who became famous on Social Media recently for his cuteness. Why not

have some heart-healing time by reading the adorable growing-up diary of Pubao, written by keeper Jung Cheol-Won, who is referred to as the “grandpa panda,” as he took care of him?

In the history genre, *The Minimum Korean History*, written by popular history lecturer Choi Tae-Sung ranked first. The book, ranked 6th on the integrated list of best sellers, helps readers understand the essence of Korean history in an easy and fun way. Also, written by Dr. Yu Hong-June, the book *You See as Much as You Know*, which was published to mark the 30th year of the book *My Exploration of Cultural Heritage* (Changbi)’s publication, ranked 2nd in the history genre. It is a compilation of 14 pieces that best represent the beauty of Korean culture from the big *My Exploration of Cultural Heritage* series. It is a travel guide for and an introduction to Korean cultural heritage. Also, the book *The History of Crisis* provides an easy explanation of the modern history of the world economy, including the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, which was one of the most formidable economic incidents in Korea, and the collapse of the Silicon Valley Bank in 2023, through illustrations, comics, essays, and news articles from the past. Follow the flow of the story, and you will be able to realize that economic history is nothing like rocket science.

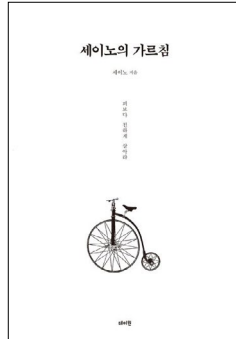
\* *K-Book Trends* Vol. 53 – Go to the article about Dr. Yu Hong-June

[www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/trend.php?ptype=view&idx=1118&page=1&code=trend&category=61](http://www.kbook-eng.or.kr/sub/trend.php?ptype=view&idx=1118&page=1&code=trend&category=61)

\* The rank of best sellers below was organized after integrating domestic best sellers in the third week of July from the four biggest online bookstores in Korea – Kyobo Bookstore, Aladdin, Yes 24, and Interpark.

Top 10 best sellers for the 3rd week of July

1



***Sayno Love***

Author | Sayno  
Publisher | Day One  
Genre | Self-help

2



***A Man of Liberal Arts Studies Science***

Author | Rhyu Si-Min  
Publisher | Dolbegae  
Genre | Humanities

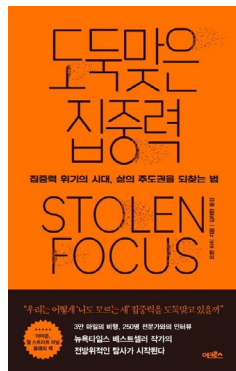
3



***BEYOND THE STORY***

Author | Kang Myung-Seok, BTS  
Publisher | BIGHIT MUSIC  
Genre | Art

4



***Stolen Focus: Why You Can't Pay Attention***

Author | Johann Hari  
Publisher | Across  
Genre | Humanities

Top 10 best sellers for the 3rd week of July

5



***La Prophétie des Abeilles 1***

Author | Bernard Werber  
Publisher | The Open Books Co.  
Genre | Fiction

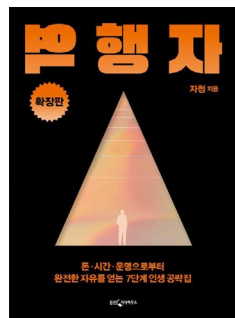
6



***The Minimum Korean History***

Author | Choi Tae-Sung  
Publisher | Front Page  
Genre | History

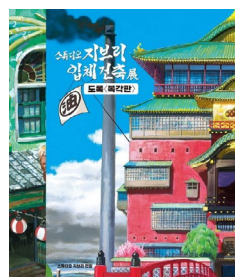
7



***Counter Your Life (extended edition)***

Author | Jachung  
Publisher | Woongjin Jisik House  
Genre | Self-help

8

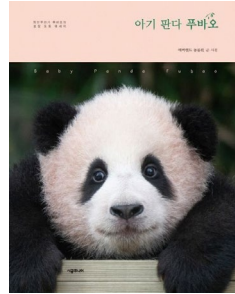


***Studio Ghibli Architecture: Art Catalogue (relaunched)***

Author | Studio Ghibli  
Publisher | Haksan Publishing  
Genre | Comics

Top 10 best sellers for the 3rd week of July

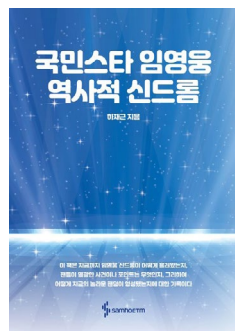
8



***Baby Panda Pubao***

Author | Everland Zoo  
Publisher | Sigong Junior  
Genre | Non-fiction

10



***National Star Lim Young-Woong and the Historical Syndrome***

Author | Ha Jae-Keun  
Publisher | Samho ETM  
Genre | Art

Top 5 history books for the 3rd week of July

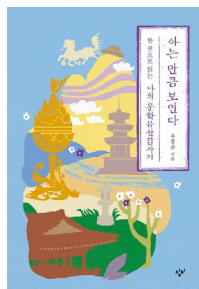
1



*The Minimum Korean History*

Author | Choi Tae-Sung  
Publisher | Front Page

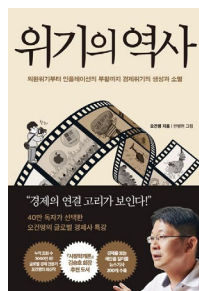
2



*You See as Much as You Know*

Author | Yu Hong-June  
Publisher | Changbi

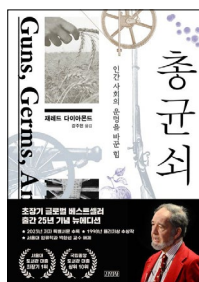
3



*The History of Crisis*

Author | Written by Oh Kun-Young,  
illustrated by Ahn Byung-Hyun  
Publisher | Page 2 Books

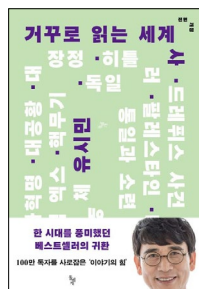
4



*Gun, Germs, and Steel*

Author | Jared Diamond  
Publisher | Gimmyoung Publishing

5



*World History Read Backwards*

Author | Rhyu Si-Min  
Publisher | Dolbegae



## KOREAN TRANSLATOR

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Slin Jung

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### Profile

Slin Jung is a freelance translator and interpreter based in Toronto, Canada. She received an MA in conference interpretation at the Graduate School of Interpretation and Translation (GSIT) at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies.

- E-mail: [slin.jung13870@gmail.com](mailto:slin.jung13870@gmail.com)

### Published Translations

- *Gwangju Uprising: The Rebellion for Democracy in South Korea* by Hwang Sok-yong, Lee Jae-Eui, and Jeon Yong-Ho (Verso, 2022)
- *Black is Black, White is White* from *The Age of Doubt* by Park Kyongni (Honford Star, 2022)
- Co-translation of *Beyond the Story: 10-Year Record of BTS* by Kang Myeongseok (Flatiron Books, 2023)



*Gwangju Uprising: The Rebellion for Democracy in South Korea, The Age of Doubt, Beyond the Story: 10-Year Record of BTS*

## Other Translations

- *Korean Literature Now*: “While They Laughed ([www.kln.or.kr/lines/fictionView.do?bbsIdx=294](http://www.kln.or.kr/lines/fictionView.do?bbsIdx=294))” by Yoon Sung-hee (2018)
- *Korean Literature Now*: “The Things We Eat in Summer ([www.kln.or.kr/frames/audioView.do?bbsIdx=162](http://www.kln.or.kr/frames/audioView.do?bbsIdx=162))” by Song Ji Hyun (2021)
- *Korean Literature Now*: “A Good Girl Like You ([www.kln.or.kr/lines/fictionView.do?bbsIdx=1933](http://www.kln.or.kr/lines/fictionView.do?bbsIdx=1933))” by Chung So-hyun (2023)

## Grants and Awards

- 13th Korean Literature Translation Award for New Career Translators (2014)
- Commendation Prize, 46th Korea Times Literature Translation Awards (2015)
- GKL Korean Literature Translation Award (2018)

- PEN Translates Award (2019)
- Multiple translation grants from the Literature Translation Institute of Korea
- Multiple translation grants from the Publication Industry Promotion Agency Of Korea

## #K-BOOK

## #Food

### KPIPA Introduces K-Books for Global Publishing Markets through K-Book Platform

#### *Tasty Philosophy*

#### 1. Publication Details

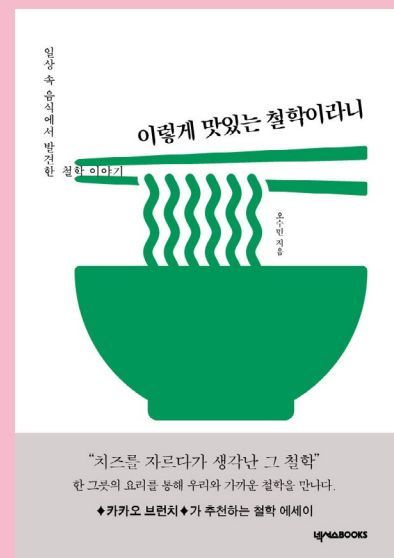
Title | Tasty Philosophy  
 Subtitle | Stories of Philosophy Found in Everyday Dishes  
 Author | Oh Sumin  
 Publisher | NEXUS Co., Ltd.  
 Publication Date | 2019-12-06  
 ISBN | 9791161658209  
 No. of pages | 248  
 Dimensions | 128 \* 188

#### 2. Copyright Contact

Name | Hyejin Chung  
 Email | copyright@nexusbook.com  
 Phone | +82-2-330-5529

#### 3. Book Intro

This book is a philosophy book that starts not with concepts, but with food. Watching bungeoppang (fish-shaped buns) being baked nice and brown, smelling the scent of Delimanjoo in the subway station, frying “backroom” chicken instead of ordering fried chicken... the writer discovered philosophical elements and wrote of philosophical concepts and philosophers in line with such experiences. No matter what the filling, the buns baked in the bungeoppang pan are all bungeoppang. Here, the writer recalled what Kant refers to as “reason,”



the ability to know. A person's ability for scientific knowledge is accepting the world through a "pan" that already takes a certain form. Does that mean that we cannot experience the raw world as it is, yet to be molded by this "pan of reason"? Is it impossible for a world to exist outside this cognition framework, this bungeoppang pan?

It's all right if we cannot answer this question. As ideas continue one after the other, readers will familiarize themselves with philosophical thoughts and suddenly feel much closer to difficult philosophers.

The writer began to discover philosophical concepts in all aspects of her every day life after she began studying philosophy. In her daily life, she thought that food, which we eat every day, was a good subject matter where we can encounter philosophy. She talked of philosophy through a dish of food, and as she tasted the food, which resembled philosophical concepts in some ways, she realized how fun philosophy was and how close it was to our lives. She began writing to share the joy of discovering such elements.

Philosophical concepts are difficult. But it would be all too regrettable if we missed the opportunity to contemplate philosophy and enjoy it as we do food. Readers will come to know "tasty philosophy," which they can freely ponder over and interpret, a philosophy that they can recall anytime, anywhere with this book.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2737](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2737)

## *Is Chicken Always Right?*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Is Chicken Always Right?

Subtitle | The 12 Foods That Explain Our World

Author | Oh Aeri, Gu Jeongeun, Lee Jiseon

Publisher | Woorischool Co.

Publication Date | 2021-11-15

ISBN | 9791167550200

No. of pages | 224

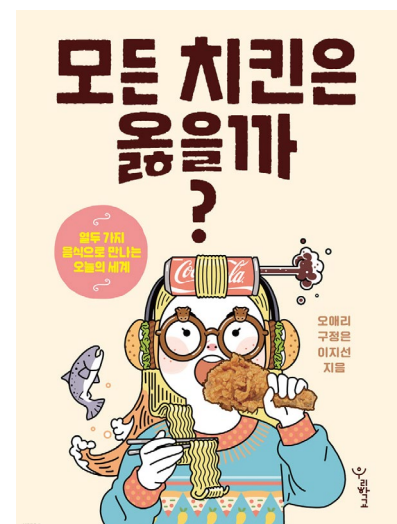
Dimensions | 138 \* 190

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### 3. Book Intro

Food is the most basic resource for survival, the symbol and identity of a culture, a major industry in the economic structure, and more importantly, a crucial part of our lives. Woorischool's new release, *Is Chicken Always Right?* explores the world and humanity through the food that Korean teenagers love the most—chicken, pizza, burgers, cola, instant noodles, jjajangmyeon, noodles, beef, curry, salmon, mango, and chocolate. These 12 beloved food items allow readers to both taste and feel interesting topics encompassing history, the economy, society, the environment, ecology, animal rights, and the capital flows of big food companies. The journalists-turned-writers who have spent their careers out in the field delivering a variety of social news, will here introduce the hidden truths and key controversies around the world through food. How did they end up on our table? How were they first made, and how did they begin to take up such an important part of our lives? What are the histories or stories behind them? This book selects the foods that Korean teenagers love in particular, to delve into the social/cultural/economic contexts and issues. It also touches upon current food-related problems as well as the global effort to tackle them for a better future. These delicious and amusing stories of food will guide us into the world today. The book covers a series of critical but interesting topics in regard to the future: the reality of industrialized livestock production and tasks that ensue; the relationship between huge capital and the food industry; the deepening globalization and stratification on our table; food created by war; the significance of staples; changes caused by the climate crisis and global warming; issues generated by salmon farming and the accelerated pollution of the marine ecosystem; reasons behind the frequent breakouts of bird flu and swine flu; the meaning of traditional food and cultural identity; the reality of poor countries that have become the greenhouse of rich countries and victims of “stolen land”; ocean plunder; the importance of the organic movement; the truth about junk food and processed food; the need for and creation of meat substitutes and cultured meat; and the establishment of seed vaults for future generations. The book also includes over 80 vivid and lively visual aids and references which allow an at-a-glance view of important socio-scientific issues.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=6574](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=6574)



## THE DAY AFTER BINGE DRINKING

### 1. Publication Details

Title | THE DAY AFTER BINGE DRINKING

Subtitle | A SELF-EXPERIMENT ON  
HANGOVER FOODS

Author | Miggang

Publisher | ScienceBooks

Publication Date | 2020-03-23

ISBN | 9791190403542

No. of pages | 180

Dimensions | 115 \* 180

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### 3. Book Intro

*THE DAY AFTER BINGE DRINKING: A SELF-EXPERIMENT ON HANGOVER FOODS* is all about author Miggang's real-life episodes behind "hangover foods". But this essay isn't only about hangover foods—it's also about everything that Koreans love, as you can probably guess from its chapter titles: Naengmyeon, noodles, Yang Pyeong hangover soup, spicy food, dumplings, blood sausage soup, and the list goes on... The book is a record of Miggang experimenting with hangover cures. The writer, who is more known for her creative works as a webtoon illustrator, fully boasts of her writing skills throughout the book and provides engaging and thrilling experiences with her scrumptious writing style that readers will love. Her vivid sense of imagination will make laugh, surprise you, and even move you to tears. Her words are never flowery or vague; rather, they're very down-to-earth and intimately related to our everyday lives. If the book left you with the urge to drink just so you can have hangover food, or reminded you to ask those around you about how they're dealing with their own morning afters, then its mission has been fully accomplished.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=4666](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=4666)

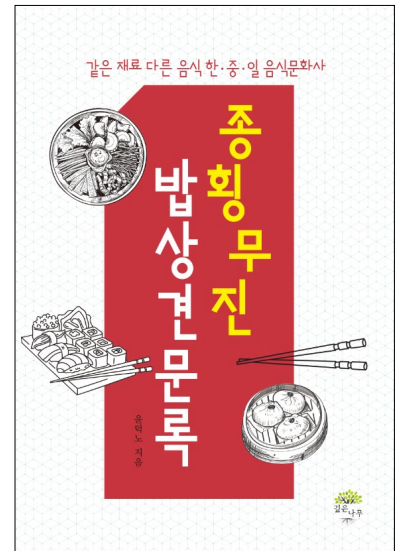
## *A Travelogue of Meals*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | A Travelogue of Meals  
Subtitle | The History of Food Culture in Korea, China and Japan: Same Ingredients but Different Dishes  
Author | Yoon Deokroh  
Publisher | Deeptree  
Publication Date | 2017-08-31  
ISBN | 9788998822385  
No. of pages | 320  
Dimensions | 147 \* 210

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### 3. Book Intro

For Koreans, the smell of the dotted gizzard shad grilling in the autumn stimulates the appetite so much that there's a saying that it will even "lure back a daughter-in-law who has run away from home." But for Japanese people, there's no worse odor than that smell. From ancient times in Korea, the small yellow croaker was one of the most popular side dishes for a meal. But in China, the large yellow croaker, which Koreans denounce as a "fake croaker," is more exorbitantly expensive. Koreans consider eggplants to be a rather boring vegetable but in China, it has been praised since the olden days as a "vegetable grown in the mountains where Taoist hermits with miraculous powers live." The Japanese believed that you will have great luck if you see an eggplant in the dream you dream on the first day of the new year.

As such, while Korea, China and Japan have historically shared several important common denominators of culture, such as rice and Confucianism, they have each built up their own unique cultural history. *A Travelogue of Meals* looks into how the cultural spirit and characteristics of these three countries are reflected in and helped develop their cuisine and dishes. Cuisine and dishes are an embodiment of a culture's values, sentiments and lifestyle in a given period, a projection of society. Even if the ingredients are the same, the unique cultural individuality of each country is shown in the handling and cooking methods. In addition, sometimes these three countries have reinterpreted each other's food, creating a whole different food. With cuisine and dishes at its center, the author tells us an interesting and special cultural history by employing humanistic imagination,

historical incidents that happened among the three countries, folktales passed down orally, and old reference materials.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2512](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2512)

## Proper Atopy Diet

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Proper Atopy Diet

Subtitle | There is No Good Food for Aatopy If You Eat Too Much

Author | Lee Gilyoung

Publisher | Y-Gelli Books

Publication Date | 2016-01-25

ISBN | 9788994140162

No. of pages | 200

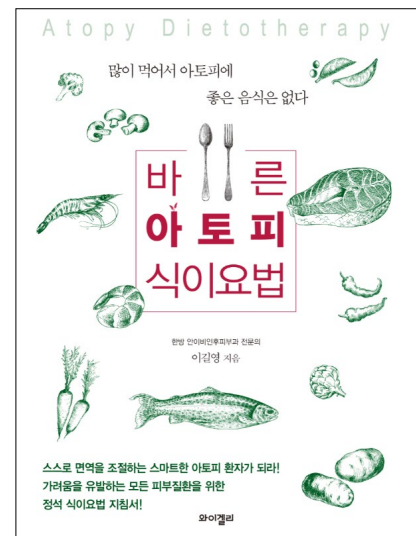
Dimensions | 148 \* 210

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### 3. Book Intro

Principles of diet based on 20 years of medical know-how from a Korean Medicine doctor specializing in atopy!

The atopy diet is completely different from diets for lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, arteriosclerosis and kidney disease patients. It is also very different a diet for growing children or the average person. This book is purely a dietary guide for atopic patients.

Atopy is affected by a variety of factors, including heredity, diet, environment, stress, and disease. Therefore, if atopy patients and their caregivers eat only one specific thing known to be good for atopy or apply it to the skin, it will only fail.

Atopy is a disease that improves by not eating a certain food or eating less.

However, non-specialists make well-meaning suggestions such as to eat natural foods, eat a lot of fermented foods, or eat a lot of seasonal fruits. But there is no food that is good for atopy if you eat too much. Excessive nutrition causes atopy.

This book focuses on dietary principles such as the atopy diet, allergenic foods such as eggs, milk, and soybeans, and precautions when composing an atopy diet. It includes ways to properly control and manage various factors that impact atopy

such as environmental issues, cosmetics, stress, diseases, etc.

Improving and restoring the immune system through diet is the answer!

The immune system of atopic patients is naturally more sensitive than the average person, but in many cases the problem becomes worse due to poor treatment and management. The solution is to reestablish the immunity of the gastrointestinal tract, which can accumulate waste from various excessive nutrients, repair the damaged skin barrier to treat the symptoms and, going forward, improve the systemic immune system. That's the reason why the right treatment and the right diet are necessary, and the fast and right way to get rid of the pain of atopy.

I hope, through this book, readers can become smart atopy patients who understand the disease properly and also hope this serves as an opportunity to strengthen the belief that atopy can be prevented to a significant degree by self-regulating immunity and, eventually, even cured.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=2147](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=2147)

## *Cuisine is Culture*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Cuisine is Culture

Subtitle | Korean and Chinese Culinary Culture in Proverbs

Author | Lee Hwahyung

Publisher | Sechang Publishing Co.

Publication Date | 2020-12-01

ISBN | 9788955866421

No. of pages | 156

Dimensions | 128 \* 175

### 2. Copyright Contact

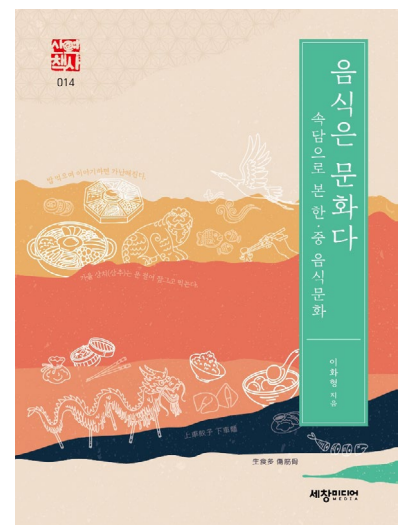
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### 3. Book Intro

Korean and Chinese culinary culture revolve around consideration for others. A good example is a difficulty of finishing the last piece of food left on a platter. The two cultures share the idea that "food and medicine share the same origin," a concept that is manifested in an emphasis on seasonal dishes. Both Korea and China enjoy a balanced diet with the main starch – either rice or noodles – served



with various side dishes.

However, Korean culinary culture has a communal connection paired with strict propriety. For instance, a pot of stew is served for a group to share, and people are expected to receive alcoholic beverages from their elders, then turn their heads away to drink as a sign of respect. Korean food, which highlights raw food, is eco-friendly. As soup became a main feature in the Korean diet, spoons became part of the table setting.

On the other hand, Chinese culinary culture is pragmatic, as seen in its reliance on easy-to-grow, nutrient-rich wheat and energizing teas. Heat intensity and cooking times are particularly important in Chinese culinary culture. An appreciation for flavors and aromas caused the development of a wide selection of ingredients, seasoning combinations, and cutting techniques.

This book compares Korean and Chinese culinary culture through their respective proverbs. Anecdotes about Japan are also included. This book demonstrates how Korean and Chinese culinary cultures diverged despite their cultural vicinity.

The Korean saying “eat well and live well,” highlights the importance of eating. For one to eat well, however, one must know how to eat well first. Knowing the culinary culture, therefore, would be foremost in eating well.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=5650](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=5650)

## *Fridge Family Makes a Pizza*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Fridge Family Makes a Pizza

Author | Yoon Jeong Joo

Publisher | Bear Books Inc.

Publication Date | 2020-07-17

ISBN | 9791158361907

No. of pages | 40

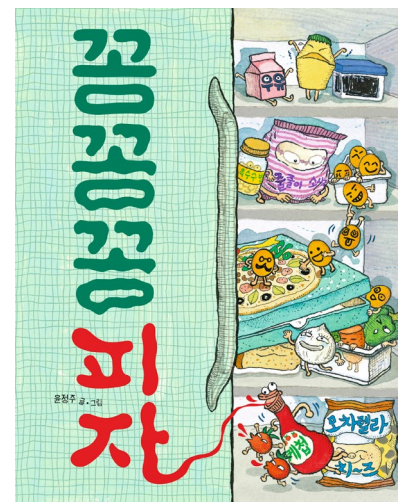
Dimensions | 205 \* 270

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### 3. Book Intro

Tonight, Mom is late coming home because of work. Song-i and her father orders and eats pizza for dinner. Pizza is Song-i's favorite food. She is barely able to

keep herself from eating the last slice of pizza so she could save it for her mother. But the pizza she put in the refrigerator disappears. The eggs in the fridge had tossed the pizza box to save the bread stuck underneath, but then the pizza box is nowhere to be seen. Knowing this, the eggs get ready to cheer up Song-i, who is sure to be disappointed by the missing pizza. Will it be possible to make hot pizza in a cold refrigerator?

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=4528](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=4528)

## *The Day I Looked at My Dad and We Smiled to One Another*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | The Day I Looked at My Dad and We Smiled to One Another

Author | Won Yousoon, Han Jisun

Publisher | Sangsangschool Publishing

Publication Date | 2017-02-05

ISBN | 9788993702941

No. of pages | 112

Dimensions | 180 \* 220



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### 3. Book Intro

Family love which embraces our shortcoming and faults and innocent children's mind that moves us

What is the meaning of 'father' to us? Is he a machine that just brings us some money? Does that mean a father who cannot earn money is not even a father? In this story, we can meet a father who lost his job and became homeless. But he realized his son was a beacon of his life so he found his son in an orphanage and decided to live for his son. Father had courage to live thanks to his son.

However, the world was not so kind to the father and the son. Father's street food booth was destroyed by patrols, and his son, Hun, stole money from others while on his school field trip. When his dad found the money in Hun's pocket, he told the truth to his father. Father had no choice but to punish him, but afterwards, he hugged Hun, but Father's heart was broken.

A warm way of looking from the author to vulnerable and excluded children



Won Yousoon who was a teacher and an author has been writing a lot of stories of isolated and vulnerable children in elementary school. *The Day I Looked My Dad and Smile to One Another* is also a story with awareness on our difficult time. The writer delivers condolences to sacrificing fathers in our times and describes Hun who was bright and mature even in difficult situations with plain words and also in a warm way. Illustrator Han Jisun used free lines and restrained color that gave unique personalities to its characters and successfully created the bright mood in the story that could have been easily described in a gloomy way.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=417](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=417)

## The 2035 SF Mystery

### 1. Publication Details

Title | The 2035 SF Mystery  
 Author | Cheon Seonran et al.  
 Publisher | Nabiclub  
 Publication Date | 2022-01-14  
 ISBN | 9791191029406  
 No. of pages | 308  
 Dimensions | 128 \* 188

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### 3. Book Intro

A convergence of science fiction, a genre that contemplates the future of humankind at the forefront of the era, and a mystery that studies the depth of humanity. The project stemmed from the idea to have writers representing each of their fields imagine the near future where the aftermath of COVID-19 has come to an end. At its basic themes, the book illustrates what could happen if factors such as human clones, refugee accommodation, genome editing, teleportation, and megalopolis emerge in our world.

It was released exclusively on Millie, and with enthusiastic response from readers, “The Corn Field and My Brother” by Cheon Seon-ran and “Sophisticated Murder” by Hwang Se-yeon are to be turned into a TV series.

“The Corn Field and My Brother”

A vast field with overgrown corn plants. A boy who is trapped in his own world. And his gentle older brother who always stays by his side. To the boy, his brother means the world, more reliable than his own parents. His brother coughs up blood and passes out one day, and from then on, he goes back and forth to the hospital every day to receive treatment, only to die in the end. The death deeply saddens his parents, and the boy cannot believe that his brother no longer exists. While wandering through the corn field, as always, he runs into his brother. It feels eerie that his brother is back from the dead, and that there is a number written on his ankle. But he is happier to reunite with his beloved brother. Insisting that he can't come back to the house yet, his brother lives in the field for a few days, eating the food that the boy brings. Meanwhile, the boy's parents bring home another brother—the third brother who is perfectly healthy, without any illness. He hugs the boy gently, like he always did, but it feels somewhat awkward and different. Days go by, and at the request of his brother hiding in the corn field, the boy unlocks the window. He hears sounds of someone opening the window and swinging a blunt object. The next morning, which brother will be coming out of that door? The second brother or the third brother? And this is not the end. The boy hears someone calling his name from the corn field. There, he sees a fourth brother.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=6552](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=6552)

## *Food in Buddhism*

### 1. Publication Details

Title | Food in Buddhism  
Subtitle | Food and Desire  
Author | Kong Manshik  
Publisher | Bulkwang Media  
Publication Date | 2018-02-05  
ISBN | 9788974793852  
No. of pages | 464  
Dimensions | 152 \* 225

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### 3. Book Intro

Food culture plays an important role in Buddhism, which relates to the problem of identity of Buddhism. The problems of food and desire comprise a cosmology in Buddhism; that is, they not only relate to the ultimate attitude of a Buddhist but also constitute a part of the discipline system. So how can we follow how food means this in Buddhism?

*Food in Buddhism* examines a massive amount of material from ancient Indian literatures to modern scholarly works as well as Buddhist literatures such as the Pali Canon in order to explicate a fundamental Buddhist understanding of food and the Buddhist attitude toward it and how this has changed over the course of time.

\* [k-book.or.kr/user/books/books\\_view?idx=3873](http://k-book.or.kr/user/books/books_view?idx=3873)